

NEWS

in brief

Salameh given two life terms

The Erez Military Court yesterday sentenced terrorist Hassan Salameh to two life terms plus 15 years, after convicting him of 31 different charges, including the murder of a Palestinian who had cooperated with Israel and responsibility for the suicide bombing in Gush Katif in June 1995, in which a soldier was wounded.

In a separate action, hearings are continuing on his involvement in the suicide bus bombings in Jerusalem last year. *Tim*

Foreign Ministry gets new spokesman

Aviv Shiron, 44, former information counsellor at the embassy in Bonn, has been appointed Foreign Ministry spokesman, replacing Danny Shek who will take up the post of consul-general in San Francisco. Before Germany, Shiron headed the ministry's public affairs department and served as the spokesman for various peace delegations in Madrid, Washington, Moscow and during the peace talks with Jordan.

Other appointments approved yesterday include: Arthur Avnon, from consul-general in Chicago to director of the ministry's Jordan department; Amikam Levy as head of manpower abroad; and Amir Ayalon, head of domestic manpower. *Jay Bushinsky*

Psychologists 'optimistic' about ending strike

The union of psychologists working for public institutions was "optimistic" yesterday about ending its strike after meeting with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. A union spokesman said the prime minister first wants to name a new finance minister, and will then instruct him to reach a solution to the nearly month-long strike, which was launched to protest against low wages for Kupat Holim and state psychologists. However, the psychologists continue to maintain a protest vigil outside the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem. *Judy Siegel*

High Court rejects Women in Green petition

The High Court of Justice yesterday rejected a petition by the Women in Green group against tomorrow's planned joint Israeli-Palestinian march in Jerusalem under the slogan "Jerusalem - Two Capitals for Two States."

Justices Shlomo Levin, Eliezer Goldberg, and Dalia Dorner said the Women in Green had not followed proper procedures, including not trying to meet with the march organizers before filing the petition. The march is to proceed from Damascus Gate to Sultan's Pool. *Tim*

Right-wing radicals arrested at Rabin grave

Seven right-wing extremists were arrested by police yesterday for alleged incitement while demonstrating near the grave of former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin on Mt. Herzl in Jerusalem. They had called for the "destruction" of Rabin's grave, saying he had been a commander of the unit which killed 16 people on the *Altalena* off the Tel Aviv beach in June 1948. *Tim*

Turkish sailor treated at Rambam

A sailor from one of the five Turkish Navy ships in Haifa Port for a rest and recreation visit underwent an emergency operation at Rambam Hospital last night. Deputy hospital director Dr. Zvi Ben-Ishai said the sailor had been admitted suffering from acute abdominal pains and it appeared that he was suffering from a bleeding ulcer. The Turkish ships - two frigates, a destroyer, a submarine, and a supply ship - are due to sail today. *David Rudge*

Paratroopers get new commander

The IDF appointed Col. Gershon Yitzhak commander of the Paratrooper Brigade in a ceremony attended by OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan and senior officers yesterday. Dayan praised Yitzhak for reaching "this yearned-for posting," and wished success to the outgoing commander, Col. Beni Gantz, who is to depart soon for study abroad. *Arish O'Sullivan*

Fatah officials appear in Hebron

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH and JON IMMANUEL

One border policeman was lightly injured and, according to Palestinian sources, three Palestinians were hurt in the sixth day of rioting in Hebron yesterday.

At one of the checkpoints between H-1 and H2, two plain-clothed Fatah officials appeared - for the first time since the riots started - and told children protesters to go home.

As throughout the week, the rioting took place in Shallala Street and the surrounding side-roads that divide H1, the Palestinian-controlled area of Hebron, and H2, the area under Israeli control.

The IDF Spokesman said troops dispersed the rioters with tear gas and rubber bullets. Clashes broke out mid-morning and continued throughout the day. Some of the Palestinian rioters wore keffiyehs to hide their faces, responding to rumors that the IDF was videotaping the clashes in order to identify the key perpetrators.

Palestinian sources claimed 10 firebombs were thrown at IDF soldiers and border policemen. The IDF Spokesman confirmed that firebombs and stones were thrown at the troops, but would not say how many.

At a meeting between General Security Service heads and Palestinian Preventive Security and Fatah chief Jibril Rajoub in Hebron on Tuesday, the PA was told that continued stone-throwing would not be tolerated.



A border policeman in Hebron aims past Palestinian women at youths throwing stones at his position yesterday. (Reuters)

BACKGROUND

Arabs await results of cabinet crisis

By JAY BUSHINSKY

The domestic cabinet crisis has thrown a further crimp into the Middle East peace process, prompting Palestinian, Egyptian, and Syrian policy makers to ride out the storm and see whether they will still have to deal with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

Senior officials in Jerusalem admit that the crisis is having an impact on efforts to reactivate the peace process.

Arab political analysts keep very close tabs on Israel's party politics, and the news media throughout the Arab world have made the princi-

pal players into household names.

Reverberations of the drama that led to Dan Meridor's resignation as finance minister reached Jerusalem from neighboring capitals and caused Israeli officials to suspect that the Arab assessments may have leaned too heavily on foreign press reports dated here.

"They have been taking the BBC too seriously," a highly-placed aide to Netanyahu said, contending that its broadcasts foreshadowed the imminent collapse of the incumbent coalition and raised the possibility of an alternative leadership taking office.

See ARABS Page 14

Mubarak: Egypt will maintain peace effort

By ELAD BECK

PARIS - Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said here yesterday that his country will maintain its mediation efforts between Israel and the Palestinians until both sides resume talks on a peace settlement.

"We are talking with the Israelis and with the Palestinians about possible solutions in many domains. The meetings are going on and we hope to reach a middle-point between both sides, so that they will be able to resume on a solution," Mubarak told journalists after a meeting with French President Jacques Chirac.

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu phoned Mubarak ear-



Hosni Mubarak (Efraim Kilobak)

lier in the day. The Egyptian president arrived yesterday in the French capital for

a short, unofficial visit. Chirac said the importance of the meeting was that it took place hours before the opening of the G-7 summit in Denver. French officials said Mubarak had asked the European Union via France to back the Egyptian initiative.

"We both regret the current situation... and all the dangers that such a situation might cause to the stability in the region," Chirac said after the meeting.

Chirac informed Mubarak about the appeal issued by the EU at the end of its Amsterdam summit this week for a quick resumption of peace talks.

See MUBARAK Page 12

Settlers rap PA road remarks

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Members of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza were outraged at remarks attributed to council chairman Pinhas Wallerstein during a tour with members of the Labor Party in the West Bank yesterday.

Radio reports quoted Wallerstein as suggesting that the Palestinian Authority should be allowed territorial continuity in the autonomous areas, and that the roads in these areas be designated under complete

Palestinian control. Yechiel Leiter, head of the council's foreign desk, said last night he found it difficult to believe that Wallerstein made the remarks attributed to him.

"If he did, then it is an impudent thing to say. The suggestion that Palestinian Arabs should enjoy territorial continuity runs counter to everything that the Yesha [Judea, Samaria and Gaza] council believes," he said. "Nothing can be more detrimental to the cause of Jews living in Yesha than the sug-

gestion of any type of Palestinian continuity," he added.

According to council spokeswoman Yehudit Tayar, Wallerstein said he had been misquoted and his remarks taken out of context. When asked by members of the delegation to comment on territorial continuity for the Palestinians, Wallerstein stressed the solution was not in connecting Judea and Samaria. Instead, she said, he suggested a linkage of roads between the existing Palestinian villages, adding that they should be under Palestinian control.

Jezzine residents protest Hizbullah bomb attacks

By DAVID RUDGE

Residents of the South Lebanese Army-controlled Jezzine enclave staged a mass demonstration in the Christian town yesterday to protest three bombings there the previous day. Four people were killed, including an SLA officer, and two wounded in the attacks.

Meanwhile, Lebanese newspapers reported yesterday that IDF and SLA troops had conducted house-to-house searches in At-Tiri in the western sector of the security zone, in an apparent attempt to track down Hizbullah collaborators who may have assisted in the planting of the huge roadside bomb which exploded alongside a Merkava tank on Sunday night.

Staff Sgt. Ya'acov Algamis, 20, of Jerusalem, was killed in that attack and three soldiers lightly wounded. Originally, IDF officers said that the blast had jammed the rear door and turret of the tank which had led to the two-hour delay in extricating the casualties.

The inquiry by OC Northern Command Maj.-Gen. Amiram Levine, however, found that the soldiers had been instructed to remain inside the tank for fear there might have been other bombs in the area. It was originally reported that the wounded soldiers all suffered light injuries, thus it was decided it would be better to move the tank before getting them out.

Concern over the possibility of further explosive devices in the area was also why the rescue unit and reinforcements did not immediately approach the tank when they arrived, leading to a delay of 40 minutes in extricating the casualties.

Winning cards and numbers

In yesterday's daily Chance drawings, the winning cards were the ace of spades, queen of hearts, 10 of diamonds, and 10 of clubs, and the king of spades, 7 of hearts, 7 of diamonds, and king of clubs. In yesterday's Paysis Hazak draw, ticket number 691652 won the NIS 1 million prize, while ticket number 054639 won a car. Tickets 899535, 793128, 405298, 391939, 521489, 191058, 145363, and 141060 won NIS 5,000. Tickets ending in 35649, 62894, 96699, 42900, 72519, 94982, 85958, 41700, 32073, 40989, 54425, 98826, 18171, 31553, 04360, 63074, 69092, 96990, and 63493 won NIS 1,000. Tickets ending in 655, 233, 675, and 218 won NIS 100. Tickets ending in 36 and 37 won NIS 30. Tickets ending in 0 and 7 won NIS 10.

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The path to self-destruction

In the old swashbuckler movies, the hero would always face off against at least two foes at a time, and best both of them at once. It is hard to remember, however, a scene such as occurred this week, in which the master swordsman suddenly breaks off from the battle and pokes someone on the sidelines to bring them into the fight.

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu already faced an increasingly flammable stalemate with the Palestinians and a budding coalition crisis with Yisrael Ba'alya, when he decided that now was the time to oust Finance Minister Dan Meridor. There are words such as "putsch" and "coup" to describe clever maneuvers by underlings to remove the man at the top; a word should be invented to describe the same act from the top down - against a minister whose threat consists of a reputation for honesty and diligence.

The claims of Netanyahu - and the solid majority of his cabinet that joined him - that the late-night vote on an arcane aspect of exchange rate policy was about a substantive issue, and not a ploy to remove Meridor, ring hollow. Meridor's main argument against the step to be taken was the risk of increased unemployment if the shekel were allowed to strengthen. Yet Foreign Minister David Levy, who normally would leap at the opportunity to pontificate on the employment issue, voted as if he were Milton Friedman.

The fact that seven ministers voted with Netanyahu, most probably with the knowledge that it meant the departure of Meridor, distributes the stain of this episode across the government, but does not absolve Netanyahu of responsibility. Nor does the fact that Meridor was thought to have wanted out of the government, and therefore was susceptible to a relatively small push, lessen the brazenness of the maneuver.

It is not uncommon for policy decisions to be tinged with unrelated and sometimes illegitimate political considerations. This was not, however, a matter of political influence on an economic decision; this was pure political score-settling dressed up as a matter of high policy.

At the very moment that he was under pressure from Sharansky to make decisions in a more serious and responsible way, Netanyahu pushed for a change in Israel's exchange-rate mechanism in a manner that seemed more tailored to removing the finance minister than to forging sensible economic policies.

Now that Netanyahu has driven out Meridor, whose failure to rally round the flag in the Bar-On Affair was the final straw for Netanyahu, he will have to contend with Sharansky, whose demands for reforms will no doubt escalate. In addition to addressing what he says is a string of unfulfilled commitments from the coalition agreement, Sharansky is demanding that the premier accept the recommendations of the committee on government procedures chaired

by himself and Meridor. After the cabinet initially balked at appointing some ministers to pre-scrub appointments before they go to the full cabinet, Netanyahu has agreed to bring to a vote Sharansky's revised appointment-review process.

The new process would add a layer of review by a high-level professional committee for a number of nominations that must be approved by the cabinet. This review would help ensure that nominations meet minimal professional and ethical standards. This would not, of course, guarantee excellence, nor absolve ministers of the final responsibility for the appointments, but would presumably weed out substandard or suspect nominations, such as that of Roni Bar-On for attorney-general.

The second portion of the Sharansky-Meridor recommendations, concerning decision-making procedures, is meeting greater resistance. Building on dozens of unimplemented recommendations from past commissions, the committee called for strategic discussions on key matters, a detailed revamping of the budget process, the designation of issues that demand regular follow-up, and the delegation of minor decisions to other forums to conserve precious cabinet time. In addition, numerous by-laws now ignored would be adhered to, such as having the cabinet briefed on every issue at least 48 hours before having to vote.

It was only two months ago, immediately after the release of the Rubinstein/Arbel report on the Bar-On Affair, that a combative, albeit somewhat chastened Netanyahu pledged on television that he had learned lessons and would make changes. Now that the High Court petitions on the matter have been rejected and he is legally free and clear, it seems that Netanyahu's ardor for self-improvement has largely dissipated.

Even if Netanyahu feels compelled to accept the Sharansky-Meridor prescriptions for reform, the real question is whether anything really will change. It is rare that mechanical or legal patches can effectively fill gaps in character or judgment. No set of procedures can protect against a prime minister who does not accept their spirit, and attempts to circumvent them at every turn.

Sharansky's proposals are essentially a last-ditch effort by a minister who is as frustrated as former science minister Ze'ev Begin and Meridor were with the way the government conducts itself. The difference this time is that, if Sharansky leaves, the government falls.

If Netanyahu does not listen and learn this time, the government will self-destruct, if not now, then a few avoidable crises later. Sharansky's recommendations should thus not be regarded as a threat, but the way to save the government from its chronic lurching from crisis to crisis, and an opportunity to finally move forward on the nation's overburdened agenda.

MEIR RONEN



Duty to 'privatize the peace'

BENNY GAON

As a native Jerusalemite forced to celebrate his bar mitzva during the War of Independence, you can only imagine how much progress I felt we had made in our ongoing quest for peace when I flew from Amman to Petra in King Hussein's private helicopter.

I was part of Prime Minister Netanyahu's first official visit to Jordan, and a paramount purpose of our trip was to explore tangible commercial opportunities between Israel and Jordan.

That was nearly a year ago, and I believe that this is an appropriate time to reflect upon what has transpired in the interim.

Readers of this paper have been treated to a broad spectrum of commentary - from left to right - concerning how our country ought to face its many challenges. The Netanyahu administration has been subject to plentiful doses of criticism and praise.

However, if there is one fixed star in this constellation of opinions, it is that ours is a nation hungry for peace.

That hunger was fostered during years of starvation; and when finally invited to the peace table, we ate ravenously.

We signed treaties with Jordan and the Palestinian Authority. Business delegations began visiting on a massive scale, seeking technology-sharing arrangements and other joint-venture partnerships. Fueled by unprecedented optimism, our economy roared ahead. Consumer spending reached new heights.

Some may argue that the accelerated pace led to a national state

of indigestion. I disagree.

In my view, the economic benefits of the peace process are irrefutable. The statistics speak for themselves.

In the 1990s, Israel's GDP increased by over a third. The number of nations with which we share diplomatic relations nearly doubled. Foreign investment in Israel rose from less than \$400 million in 1992 to \$2.4 billion last year.

Israeli enterprises found themselves on corporate radar screens

too precious to be squandered.

THE present administration, led by the prime minister, stressed that overriding theme during this week's Caesarea Economic Conference.

The government's initiatives, particularly regarding macroeconomic and fiscal discipline, have been admirable. These measures are needed to contain inflation and sustain responsible growth over a protracted period of time. The market welcomed these

More than just a political or commercial objective, the peace process demands our collective national commitment

from which they had been absent in the past. Israeli products were able to penetrate new markets which had previously been inhospitable, or completely closed to them.

In total, the direct contribution of the peace process to the national economy has been estimated at about 2 percent a year, or over \$10 billion since the Gulf War.

However, these numbers tell only part of the story.

The peace process also enabled a redistribution of resources from defense to infrastructure, transportation, telecommunications and education. The felicitous impact on our national well-being over the longer term is therefore inestimably greater.

Against this background, it is clear that the benefits of peace are

developments. Investors feel that our government has begun to articulate - and deliver upon - its own corporate strategy. Several objectives, including privatization targets, have been declared and achieved.

Over 75 percent of the NIS 4 billion expected by the government in privatization proceeds in 1997 is already accounted for. The stock market, paced by the return of the international funds and renewed local confidence, has performed extremely well.

Nevertheless, as laudable as these measures are, they cannot be divorced from the parallel economic imperative of accelerating the peace process. A host of countries, including several in the region (Oman, Qatar, Morocco,

Tunisia and Egypt), continue to place Israel on hold, and commercial opportunities have been stifled by lingering political uncertainty.

As president and CEO of Israel's largest industrial enterprise, I have long felt that the business community has a duty to "privatize the peace." That was the purpose of my visit with the prime minister and many subsequent visits to Jordan.

In the meantime, to foster industrial opportunities in Jordan, Koor has been a partner in a dairy, a retail mall, a minibus assembly plant, a battery manufacturing facility, an agrochemical formulation and distribution plant, and an investment fund with the Jordanian government.

I expect that similar undertakings will soon be possible in Egypt and, eventually, with our other neighbors in the region as well.

Nevertheless, the peace process is not just a political objective or a commercial objective. It is an existential objective that demands our collective national energies and commitment.

Neither the government nor the business community - nor anyone else, for that matter - can serve as the exclusive cynosure to guide this process. We must continue to work together diligently and without distraction to achieve lasting peace.

We have already tasted the first fruit, yet there is an entire orchard that needs to be cultivated.

The writer is president and CEO of Koor.

Good guys vs. crooks in government

YOSEF GOELL

In politics, as in many other walks of life, crooked operators nearly always win out over the relatively honest in the short run. Neither cynics nor naifs can say for certain, however, whether the same is true in the long run.

In this week's dramatic showdown between the prime minister and his eminence grise, Avigdor Lieberman, on the one hand, and Finance Minister Dan Meridor on the other, ending in Meridor's resignation, there is not the slightest doubt over who belongs to which category.

The results of a quickie Channel 1 poll on Wednesday night found that 45 percent of those polled said they believed Meridor's version of what had brought on his resignation, as opposed to only 19 percent who believed Netanyahu's diametrically opposed version.

Netanyahu asserted that he had not plotted to push Meridor out of his government, but said Meridor had left him no choice but to seek a showdown in the cabinet, after "he refused to hedge even a millimeter toward a compromise with the governor of the Bank of Israel [on the shekel exchange rate band issue]."

Meridor claimed that at the night-long session between the three at the Caesarea Economic Conference on Tuesday, he had, in effect, worked out a compromise with Governor Jacob Frenkel, but that Netanyahu, after first agreeing, had torpedoed it.

In such a situation, outside observers who were not privy to that meeting have to fall back on the reputations of the two protagonists.

Meridor is the Likud's "Mr. Clean." He has, over the years, braved the wrath of his party col-

leagues and undermined his own political prospects by refusing to huddle under in the face of demands that Likud governments pack the government bureaucracy with party appointees.

He was also openly critical of Netanyahu's performance in the Bar-On Affair.

Netanyahu, for his part, has spent his first year in office trying to wriggle out of jams he himself

leadership of the Likud from the party's "princes" in 1993.

Why, then, did Netanyahu include Meridor in his cabinet and in such a senior position as finance minister, to boot?

The fact is that Netanyahu preferred Frenkel, but flinched at the prospect of opposition from inside the Likud if he excluded Meridor from a senior position in his cabinet. He also needed Meridor's rep-

Both Meridor and Netanyahu were looking for a pretext to bring about the showdown between them

has created by his penchant for talking out of both sides of his mouth, an anatomical feat ordinary people call lying.

He has lied to presidents Clinton and Mubarak, to his own ministers and coalition partners, to his own party and to the public - not to mention the police interrogators who grilled him over the Bar-On Affair.

Yet much of this is beside the point. It is clear that both Meridor and Netanyahu were looking for a pretext to bring about the showdown between them.

They finally found it in the incredibly arcane issue of the tilt and breadth of the diagonal band that governs the exchange rate of the shekel against a basket of foreign currencies.

THAT Meridor and Netanyahu cannot stand each other has been clear since Netanyahu wrested the

utation for political honesty as a fig leaf to cover what has proven to be one of the most politically thuggish governments in the country's history.

Netanyahu's interpretation of this week's High Court ruling - that Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein's decision not to prosecute him in connection with the Bar-On Affair had not been "extremely unreasonable" - led him to believe he could now shed that itchy fig leaf.

Why didn't Meridor resign when the attorney-general issued his scathing report on Netanyahu's role in the affair in April; when Netanyahu clearly double-crossed him in opposing the Produt Report on the capital market, or after Netanyahu worked out a deal behind Meridor's back on the budget?

The best answer is that it took Likud loyalist Meridor time and an accumulation of slaps on the

face from Netanyahu to screw up his courage to quit.

It should also be recalled that taking steps to bring down Netanyahu in April, in the wake of the Bar-On Affair, would have run the risk of bringing Labor's Shimon Peres back as prime minister.

Netanyahu's one and only achievement in the past year has been to prevent Peres from continuing as premier, with all we now know about what that would have meant regarding far-reaching concessions to the Syrians and Palestinians.

But super-dove Peres is now out of the way, and the problem of voting against Netanyahu and bringing him down is thus less traumatic for Likud stalwarts like Meridor, Ze'ev Begin, Yitzhak Shamir and Moshe Arens.

Meridor is now saying that he will not vote for Netanyahu if he is the Likud's candidate next time around. Shamir echoes that sentiment, and Arens is only a little more circumspect regarding his opposition to Netanyahu.

Together with Begin, who quit Netanyahu's government several months ago, they form a formidable opposition within the Likud.

Netanyahu controls the Likud machinery sufficiently to overcome such opposition. But guaranteeing the continued support of coalition partners Yisrael Ba'alya and the Third Way, whose constituencies are much more sensitive to the theme of good guys vs. crooks in government, is a very different matter. They might well bring on early elections.

The writer comments on public affairs.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

KILL SPEED

Sir, - I refer to Peter Kingston's letter of May 28, regarding speeding and what he calls "accidents," a euphemism for road deaths and injuries.

Mr. Kingston's conclusions on speeding are out of date by at least five to six years and he is apparently not aware of the recent successful speed-control projects in England based on the slogan, "Speed kills - kill speed."

Recent technology has solved the problem of excessive film costs - digital traffic cameras store up to

25,000 frames on a single digital cassette, a storage cost of 1,000 photographs per shekel. These technologies have been able to pay their way through income from traffic fines and savings in road-crash costs.

During the 1996 five-month speed-enforcement project in Netanya, the overall casualty rates dropped by 50 percent compared with 10 comparison towns, and speeds dropped by up to 20 percent along the two high-risk roads - Ben-Gurion and Ben-Zvi Boulevards. Killed and injured

along these two roads dropped from 15 to 1995 to 0 in 1996, in the period of the project, a 100 percent drop following speed reduction.

It seems that the real world link between traffic speeds and deaths is not in accord with Mr. Kingston's preconceptions. He would be advised to restudy the Newtonian Laws of Motion and the kinetic energy-speed formula he learned in high school.

GERRY BEN-DAVID,
Center for Driver Research
Jerusalem.

ANOTHER RELIGION

Sir, - Your editorial of June 13 placed too much emphasis on the violence of the haredi community against their Reform and Conservative brethren at the Wall on Shavuot. While one can not condone violence against anyone, particularly fellow Jews, it is important to remember that there is an essential ideological difference that must be brought to bear.

Orthodoxy has always been opposed to any change in the fundamental beliefs of Judaism. All the tampering done by Reform over the years can only be compared to how Christianity evolved from Judaism some 1,500 years ago.

Therefore it is quite understandable that Orthodoxy has, and will always, distance itself from any reforming movements, so as to ensure a continuity of authentic Judaism.

By sitting on the same religious councils, it implies that Reform is an acceptable part of Judaism. At this time, Orthodoxy must look out and welcome all Jews, but at the same time must shy away from these seemingly Jewish movements, which are no more than another religion.

JERUSALEM.

SKEPTICAL PUBLIC

Sir, - Mr. Hussein's seductive vision of the future ("Our city, June 6) reads like a travel brochure: "a Palestinian state living peacefully with its neighbors." It is, he says, "very imaginative and creative." But is it sufficiently connected to reality? How to reconcile it with the PA-instigated murder of Arabs who sell land to Jews, the internal use of torture and repression, the tactic of threats and terrorism against the Israeli people, the propagandistic use of official lies, the refusal to carry out basic obligations such as the amendment of the PLO charter? How to reconcile the facts with Mr. Hussein's claim that the Palestinians are ready for his-

torical compromise?

I do not doubt Mr. Hussein's sincerity. He is to be commended for writing this type of article, which moves beyond the tortured logic of Israeli left-wing extremism and reaches out to a skeptical Jewish-Israeli public. However, after a near century of failed attempts to eliminate the Jewish presence in the land of Israel by violence, that skeptical public will have to be convinced that the rhetoric of compromise is more than a tactic of last resort. To be effective, the rhetoric will have to be backed up by facts on the ground.

JONATHAN ROGAWSKI
Efrat.

MICKEY MOUSE

Sir, - If it were not so tragic, it would be funny. The idea of creating an attraction along the EPCOT model for the "Jewish experience" at Heichal Shlomo, at a cost of some \$20 million (June 3), is ludicrous and bizarre. This country would benefit by not trying to make Judaism a Disney theme.

Transforming a white-elephant building into a tourist attraction isn't necessary, since Israel itself exemplifies the living day-to-day Jewish experience and we certain-

ly don't need a multimedia extravaganza to illustrate it. What's better than going to the city of Jerusalem and visiting Yad Vashem, the Wall, the Knesset, the museums, the Haas Promenade, etc.?

The use of Heichal Shlomo to create a self-contained, imaginary miniature version of our beautiful reality is misguided, and a real Mickey Mouse of an idea.

TEL AVIV.

מכזאן השכל

The friendly majority

Dan Meridor's resignation from the Finance Ministry has been the big story this week. But we should not allow it to overshadow an important display of American friendship for Israel.

It came on June 10, wrapped up in the vote by 406 members of the House of Representatives for a resolution that calls upon the president and the secretary of state "to affirm publicly, as a matter of US policy, that Jerusalem remain the undivided capital of the State of Israel." (Only 17 members of the house were opposed.)

As a consequence of the vote, one might have expected the Knesset to issue some public expression of gratitude. But it was too occupied with other affairs.

The House of Representatives vote is a barometer of US support for Israel beyond the question just of Jerusalem's future. Three weeks earlier, incidentally, the Senate passed an identical resolution.

Yasser Arafat seems to be more on the ball than we are. The Palestinian Authority chairman grasped the significance of the vote better than the many Israeli politicians who repeatedly sound dire warnings of our imminent abandonment by the US.

And Arafat - who has relied too much on our media, which for months has prophesied a deterioration in America's stance regarding Israel - was furious. He vented his rage noisily in Hebron's casbah.

An ironic and sobering observation: Last week's Washington majority - 96 percent - in favor of a resolution declaring united Jerusalem the sole capital of Israel is proportionally larger than the same proposal would elicit in the Knesset. It makes one think.

Arafat has been spoiled over the last few months by the succession of anti-Israel resolutions on Jerusalem in various international forums.

The US broke the sequence somewhat by twice vetoing anti-Israel decisions in the UN Security

MOSHE ZAK

Council - but each time it added its own reservations on Israel's activities in Jerusalem.

Congress's decision last week not only erases those anti-Israel resolutions; it also evinces unambiguous support of Israel's position on Jerusalem.

Arafat's rage is understandable. The only conclusion left to him is that his vision of fomenting a rift between the US and Israel is an idle dream.

TRUE, administration officials take pains to stress to the Palestinians that it is the president

The whole world's against us? Don't you believe it!

who lays down policy and not Congress, and that is no more than the truth; but the administration will not be able to ignore Congress's unambiguously-stated position on Jerusalem.

Now it will have to do everything it can to prevent a head-on clash with Israel. "The US should never provoke confrontation with Israel," Gen. Brent Scowcroft, president George Bush's national security adviser, wrote recently, suggesting an alternative means of pressuring Israel.

Last week's resolution aside, the House of Representatives has made amendments to the State Department Allocations Law in line with giving practical support to Jerusalem as Israel's capital; and Congress has allocated \$100 million over two years for a US embassy in Jerusalem.

Even more important, it has taken legal steps to render the American Consulate in Jerusalem subordinate to the US Embassy. Implementing these steps would do away with the current anomaly whereby the consul-general in Jerusalem represents the US to the Palestinian Authority in Gaza,

while the ambassador in Tel Aviv is accredited to Israel's government in Jerusalem.

The administration will do its utmost to delete those paragraphs detailing the practical measures recommended by Congress. But it cannot disregard the spirit in which they were made.

Our government, in neglecting the consulate issue, implied that it was of little significance; it therefore fell to 406 congressmen to take the matter into their hands.

There are those who will try to dampen any enthusiasm for last week's friendly vote. But we must not allow them to sow panic by citing the UN General Assembly's anti-Israel votes on Har Homa, or other condemnations of Israel by other international bodies.

The weight of the Congress vote is incomparably greater than any UN Assembly decision could be.

In its resolution, the House of Representatives praises the Israeli administration in Jerusalem over the 30 years since the city's unification. It says: "The Congress strongly believes that Jerusalem must remain an undivided city in which the rights of every ethnic and religious group are protected, as they have been by Israel during the past 30 years."

So it isn't true that the whole world is against us. That friendly majority on Washington's Capitol Hill is stronger than the knee-jerk majority in New York's UN building, which can always be relied upon to support any proposal condemning Israel.

Arafat's throwing stones in Hebron won't alter American public opinion. Congress in effect said as much last week.

The sooner the PA leader shakes off the intoxication induced by those other votes against Israel and rid himself of the illusion that he can isolate us, the sooner he is ready for compromise, the better his chances of profiting from the negotiations will be.

The writer, a veteran journalist, comments on current affairs.



peace'

and Egypt), continue to hold, and opportunities have been lingering political issues

president and CEO of largest industrial concern I have long felt that the community has a duty to

ize the peace." That was the purpose of my visit with the minister and many other visits to Jordan.

meanwhile, to foster industries in Jordan. Knesset men a partner in a dairy, a mall, a minibus assembly

a battery manufacturing plant, an agrochemical formulation and distribution plant, and a joint fund with the Jordan government.

pect that similar undertakings will soon be possible in the area, eventually with our neighbors in the region.

Nevertheless, the peace process is just a political objective, not a commercial objective. It is a crucial objective that demands collective national energy and commitment.

Whether the government nor the business community - nor anyone else - can serve as an exclusive sponsor to the peace process. We must continue to work together diligently and with determination to achieve lasting peace.

Government

Netanyahu to serve as a bridge to the peace process. It should also be recalled that Netanyahu's role in the peace process is not to be confused with that of a mediator.

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Applying the lessons of Bar-On

How is Benjamin Netanyahu applying the lessons learned from the Bar-On Affair? Let's hope that the current crisis over monetary reform is not an example.

Did Netanyahu stage the Caesarea showdown with Dan Meridor Monday night despite the fact that the finance minister was due to leave that evening for an urgent meeting with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Crown Prince Hassan, or because of it?

Did Meridor's opposition to the Bar-On appointment enter into it? There is more than a slight suspicion that the foreign currency account is not the only one that Netanyahu is interested in settling. All's fair in love and war, and especially in politics.

The euphoria induced by the High Court decisions on Sunday brought out the killer instinct on Monday.

If Netanyahu misunderstands the High Court judgments in the Bar-On Affair and thinks that he has been cleared, the court itself is partly to blame. In a series of decisions, it has created the impression that sitting in judgment on the political process has become a judicial function.

Hence, when the court declines to intervene, as in Bar-On, there is a misapprehension that the politicians have come out clean.

Even express declarations to the opinions that the court was deciding on only the criminal, not the normative aspects of the case, went largely unreported. Justice Yitzhak Zamir went so far as to add to one of his opinions a section entitled "On Law and Ethics." In it, he warns against going too far in turning ethical norms into legal rules.

An excess of legal prohibitions in public life, Zamir maintains, would be difficult to enforce, and would remain on the law books as dead letters. The enforcement of ethical norms in the public life, he declares, is the function of the political process, with the ultimate accounting at election time.

In one of Sunday's High Court cases, Zamir authored the principal judgment rejecting a petition to order the government to create a judicial commission of inquiry to go into the non-criminal aspects of the Bar-On Affair. This was a return to a position Zamir had taken more than three decades ago during the Lavon Affair.

David Ben-Gurion, then out of government, had demanded a judicial commission of inquiry, a demand that in 1968 led to the present law on investigatory commissions.

Instead, the justice minister, Pinhas Rosen, set up a cabinet committee of seven ministers,

ALLAN E. SHAPIRO

which he chaired, to investigate the so-called "mishap" of 1954, a disastrous army intelligence operation in Egypt, followed by a cover-up involving perjury, suborning of witnesses, and the falsification of documents.

The committee of seven cleared Ben-Gurion's nemesis, Pinhas Lavon, the former defense minister, of all responsibility. Rosen asked Dr. Yitzhak Zamir, then a young law lecturer at the Hebrew University, for an opinion.

Zamir concluded, in a 67-page opinion, that the government had

If Netanyahu thinks that he has been cleared in the affair, the High Court is partly to blame

the discretion to refuse to appoint a commission of inquiry under the prevailing law, and was within its rights in opting for the committee of seven.

AS in his 1965 opinion on the Lavon Affair, so in his present judgment in Bar-On: Zamir upholds the refusal of the government to appoint a judicial commission of inquiry.

However, under the present law, he declares that the negative decision of the government is subject to judicial review, and would be reversed by the High Court if it went beyond the realm of reason.

The range of discretion that the government enjoys on such a matter is so broad, he contends, that it is difficult to imagine a concrete case in which the court would reverse a decision of the government not to go the judicial investigation route.

In the Bar-On matter, Zamir points out that "there are few affairs that were investigated so thoroughly by the police." That leaves open precisely the area Zamir delineates as the ethical one, in which the police presumably have no role to play.

Ethical purity, however, is a legitimate area of concern for the state comptroller, where governmental action is concerned. A report by the state comptroller can trigger the creation of a judicial commission of inquiry.

This was the case with the Bejski Commission, which investigated the rigging of the stock market for bank shares, following the report of then state comptroller Yitzhak Tunik.

The catch is that while the state comptroller can recommend a judicial inquiry, the decision to establish one is left to the Knesset State Control Committee, which has a majority representing the coalition parties.

Unless there is a break in party ranks, there are few cases in which the committee would decide on the creation of an inquiry commission against the wishes of the government.

The lessons of the Bar-On Affair, therefore, are twofold. One is that the law should be changed to permit the state comptroller to initiate the creation of a judicial commission of inquiry on the basis of his own preliminary inquiry.

As the law provides, the comptroller would refer matters involving criminal prosecution to the police. The comptroller's job is the protection of standards of sound administration in government, including ethical rules of public behavior.

The second lesson is more in the nature of a premonition. We have seen how the people around Netanyahu go about choosing an attorney-general.

It remains to be seen how they will decide on a candidate for the post of state comptroller when the term of the present incumbent, Miriam Ben-Porat, expires.

The writer comments on legal and political affairs.

From Ayyash to McVeigh

STEPHEN M. FLATOW

The debate will now begin over whether Timothy McVeigh truly deserves to die for the murder of 168 men, women, boys and girls in Oklahoma City.

Sure, the jury has spoken, twice over. The penalty is in line with Federal law. The horror of the crime is beyond measure or comprehension.

Sounds like a lock on plunging a needle into McVeigh's arm one day.

But will that needle ever reach McVeigh? Should it? Moral opposition to the death penalty has already come from Bishop William S. Skylstad, chairman of the US bishops' Domestic Policy Committee, who believes executing McVeigh "would tragically perpetuate a terrible cycle of violence and further diminish respect for life...."

The law itself is untested; its constitutionality has never been reviewed by the United States Supreme Court.

Cost, too, becomes an issue. Is it worth the \$3 million in taxpayer-funded legal fees that it will cost as the verdict and penalty are appealed through the legal system, compared to the \$1 million it will cost to keep McVeigh in prison for the rest of his life?

Moral and legal opposition and financial considerations aside, is

there another reason that McVeigh should not be executed? Is there a lesson to be learned by others, not from his death but from his life - one to be spent, as long as he lives, behind bars?

Each spring, Arab youths in the autonomous territories stage a

along with his victims'.

That is the way to meet Allah, so potential suicide bombers are told. Last year, when notorious "Engineer" Yihye Ayyash, responsible for dozens of deaths in Israel, met his end via a booby-trapped telephone pressed to his ear, his

EXECUTE Timothy McVeigh, and again we run the risk of creating a martyr - the same way that David Koresh and Waco became a fixation for McVeigh.

EXECUTE Timothy McVeigh, and his photograph will go up on the bedroom walls of skinheads and in the dark meeting rooms of white supremacists and anti-government militias around the US.

If Waco was a harbinger of McVeigh's act in Oklahoma City, why let his execution serve a similar purpose for some other sick mind?

If, on the other hand, we let McVeigh live for the rest of his life in prison, there is no glory, there is no martyrdom. And, possibly, there will be no more attacks against Federal office buildings.

I think it is worth the gamble.

The writer is the father of Allie Flatow, who was killed in a terrorist attack near Kfar Doron on April 9, 1995.

have seen glory in his own death. Maybe the absence of glory is enough to stop the next impressionable Arab youth from packing dynamite around his waist or in a shopping bag and walking onto a bus or into a crowd at an outdoor cafe.

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The officers, members and staff of Bnai Zion extend condolences to our immediate past-president
Rabbi REUBEN M. KATZ
 on the loss of his brother
SAMUEL
 Alan G. Hevesi President Mel Parness Executive Vice-President

A memorial service and unveiling in loving memory of
EVA NARROW (SEGAL) ז"ל
 will take place on Monday, June 23, 1997 (18 Sivan 5757) at 5 p.m. at Shikun Vatikim Cemetery, Netanya. We will meet at the gate.
 The Family

Livnot U'Lehibanot and Alumot together with Yeshivat Darche Noam/Shapel's Midreshet Rachel invite alumni and friends to the Siyum Mishnayot and Divrei Hespel in honor of the Shloshim of
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Hague wins Tory leadership

News agencies

LONDON (AP) - Ex-Welsh Secretary William Hague, 36, yesterday won the leadership of Britain's Conservative Party, becoming the party's youngest leader in 200 years.

Hague, from the center-right and an opponent of Britain ever joining a single European currency, defeated ex-Treasury chief Kenneth Clarke, the party's leading pro-European in a third round ballot by 90-72 votes.

John Major stepped down as leader within hours of the Conservatives' crushing defeat in the May 1 election at the hands of Tony Blair's Labor Party.

Hague, 36, clinched victory after winning the backing late Wednesday of former prime minister Margaret Thatcher, the standard-bearer of the right wing.

Hague, now leader of the opposition, faces a daunting task in trying to rebuild the party, traumatized by its landslide defeat by Labor after 18 years in power.

The scale of the Tory defeat was due partly to splits over closer relations EU, particularly right-wing demands to rule out Britain joining the single currency.

Lady Thatcher did not have a vote in the ballot but remains an influential figure in the party right-wing.

Hague won despite a stumble



William Hague (Reuters)

Monday when he said he would insist the party's top spokesmen rule out joining a single currency for a decade.

That stipulation may eliminate Clarke - who rates nationally and among grassroots activists as the most popular Conservative - from the party hierarchy.

A national survey of chairmen of local party branches released Thursday by Tory headquarters showed Clarke with support from 389, compared to 260 for Hague.



Turks out
 Iraqi trade unionists with a portrait of Saddam Hussein protest in front of the Turkish embassy in Baghdad yesterday, calling on Ankara to withdraw its troops from northern Iraq. The Turks are on a mission to crush Kurdish separatists who keep their bases inside Iraq as they fight for independence from Turkey. (Reuters)

Turkish president assesses PM candidates

ANKARA (AP) - President Suleyman Demirel yesterday sounded out political leaders before designating a successor to modern Turkey's first Islamic premier.

Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan resigned to thwart pressure from the military, which was angered over his attempts to put a stronger Moslem stamp on society.

Erbakan was hoping that his Islamic-oriented Welfare Party could remain in power by staying in a coalition with the center-right True Path Party.

The outcome depended on Demirel, who has said he would act quickly.

Demirel met first with main opposition leader Mesut Yilmaz, head of the conservative Motherland Party.

Yilmaz offered himself as an alternative to Ciller, saying he

could govern without the Islamic party's support. Demirel was leaning toward that option, Yilmaz told reporters after the meeting.

"The country needs a government to protect (the secular) system ... and we are ready to take responsibility," he said.

Neither True Path nor Motherland alone can muster enough votes for a majority in Parliament, which must approve the government. Mrs. Ciller and Yilmaz are bitter rivals and are unlikely to join forces themselves to keep out Welfare.

Under an agreement between Erbakan's Welfare and True Path, she would lead the country to early elections within four months.

But several obstacles remained. Tradition calls on Demirel, an independent, to designate the leader of the main opposition party - Yilmaz.

Mrs. Ciller similarly may have trouble gathering enough support.

Although she has the outside support of a small ultra-nationalist party which gives her a majority backing in Parliament, defections from her own party may prove troublesome.

It was also unclear if the new setup would be satisfactory for the generals.

Erbakan angered the secular establishment with his attempts to allow female civil servants to wear Islamic outfits and a decision to change working hours to fit fasting hours during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

Aside from such symbolic moves, the generals also were outraged by heightened calls for an Islamic regime at rallies and in speeches by Welfare deputies.

The military issued its first ultimatum to Welfare in February. After Erbakan appeared defiant, it got harsher and warned that it would crush the Islamic political movement with the use of arms if necessary.

Jospin program angers Right

PARIS - Over angry shouts by conservative lawmakers, Socialist Premier Lionel Jospin yesterday proposed a 4 percent rise in the minimum wage and vowed to block the siphon of public services.

In his first National Assembly speech since his leftist coalition came to power in a stunning June 1 parliamentary runoff victory, Jospin also promised to revamp the former right-wing government's tough immigration laws.

"The French made a choice full of hope but heavy with demands," Jospin said. "We want to give a precious thing back to the country ... a meaning." Jospin had been under pressure from the Communists in his coalition to grant the rise in the minimum wage, currently at about 6,400 francs (\$1,100) a month.

In proposing the 4 percent increase, Jospin called it "the strongest rise in buying power over the past 15 years for that salary level." Conservatives, shouting repeatedly during the speech, howled in their loudest protest.

Jospin said he opposed privatizing public sector industries "with-

out justification in the national interest." Alluding to the phone company France Telecom, he mentioned telecommunications, electronics and "other sectors." But Jospin underlined that "adaptation will be necessary to maintain our level among the most developed nations of the world."

Jospin proposed a plan to build 100,000 dwellings and renovate 1 million others to expand housing and fight record 12.8 percent unemployment. He also called for an increase in student aid but stopped short of other new programs pending a study of the state budget to be completed next month.

The new premier, with whom conservative President Jacques Chirac must now share power, won the vote by blasting the conservatives' inability to cut the jobless rate with market-oriented policies of cutting spending and business taxes.

Instead, the left betes to stimulate job-creation by putting more money in employees' hands and by cutting the work week to spread jobs around.

(News agencies)

'McLibel' decision makes hamburger of activists

LONDON (Reuters) - After the longest trial in English legal history, two penniless activists were found guilty of libelling hamburger giant McDonald's and ordered to pay £60,000 (NIS 350,000) in damages yesterday.

Judge Roger Bell found that the statements in a six-page pamphlet published by Helen Steel, 31, and Dave Morris, 43, in 1984 that McDonald's was responsible for starvation in the Third World, destruction of rainforests and for selling unhealthy food "injured the plaintiff's reputation." But other allegations that the fast food group's advertising was exploitative of children, that it was responsible for cruelty to some animals and that it paid low wages were accurate, he said.

"The majority of the defamatory statements I found to be untrue. Others were true," Judge Roger Bell said in his two-hour summation of the "McLibel" case that attracted worldwide attention.

Both sides claimed victory after the judgement. "For the sake of our employees and our customers, we wanted to show these serious allegations to be false and I am pleased that we have done so," Paul Preston, chairman of McDonald's Restaurants Ltd (UK) said in a later statement.

Morris and Steel, who conducted their own defense during the 313-day trial after being denied state legal aid, said the trial had vindicated McDonald's critics.

"Despite the overwhelming odds ... the judge has found McDonald's guilty of exploiting children, of cruelty to animals and of having an anti-union attitude," Steel said.

"We wanted to show by example you can stand up to even the most powerful adversary," said Morris.

The crusading pair vowed to take the case to the European Court of Human Rights to challenge English libel laws: Because they have no money they could not pay the damages, they added.



RUS ELISHEVA
bas
HARAV CHAIM OZER CHAIT

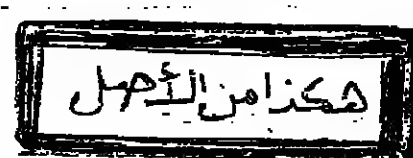
We are grieved by the sudden and tragic loss of Rus. We mourn together with the Chait and Zwick mishpachot. Her chesed and ahavas Torah will act as an everlasting light which will continue to burn in our hearts.

K'lal Yisroel has suffered the loss of a true bas Torah. We will not forget her.

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BIFERMAN FAMILY	KAPLAN FAMILY	MEISELS FAMILY	SASSOON FAMILY	ZUCKER FAMILY

In deep sorrow, we announce the passing of my dear wife, our mother, sister, grandmother and great-grandmother
ESTHER CHAIT
 Daughter of Reb Baruch Mordechai Wolkovitch ז"ל
 The funeral will take place today, Friday, June 20, 1997 (15 Sivan 5757) at 11:00 a.m., at the new Rishon Lezion cemetery.
 We shall meet at the cemetery entrance.
 Shiva at the "Ad 120" retirement home, Apartment 2, 40 Smilanski, Rishon Lezion.
The Bereaved Family



Advertisement for 'The Jerusalem Post' featuring a portrait of Herb Keim and text including 'Lukro et...', 'Ben-Zion Miller...', 'Alberto Mizrahi...', 'Conductor Dr. Me...', 'Tuesdays, June...', 'Mann Auditorium, T...', 'THE JERUSALEM POST', 'DIRECT L...', 'DEPART...'.

The rise and fall of an 'outsider'

As soon as Dan Meridor became a threat to Binyamin Netanyahu, his fate was sealed. Herb Keinon reports on the roots of a showdown

A whiny milquetoast without a trace of backbone is the Dan Meridor image perpetuated over the last year by the popular satirical show, *Hartzufim*: Meridor's puppet is the wing who can't stand up to anyone; the nebbish at the beach who, if you just blow hard enough, will simply wither away.

Whereas the Meridor family was well-accepted in all sectors of society, Netanyahu's family was not even accepted by all those on the Right. "Netanyahu's father was part of the small Jabotinsky circle on the Right," Vardi said. "They were not even accepted by the Irgun circle. While they were the outsiders, Meridor's family was very much on the inside."

The prime minister, as he made clear in the various post-fight interviews he granted, would have us believe that the battle over the "diagonal mechanism," which restricts fluctuations in the shekel exchange rate, was a legitimate disagreement between those charting the country's economic strategy. That the battle began just a day after the High Court of Justice ruled in Netanyahu's favor on the Bar-On Affair could, therefore, be chalked up to coincidence.

Netanyahu, on the other hand, leaptfrogged over the party apparatus. Like Meridor, he began his political career in 1982, when then-Israeli ambassador to the US Moshe Arens plucked him out of relative obscurity to become his deputy in Washington. When Meridor became a MK in 1984, Netanyahu became the UN ambassador. And when Meridor became justice minister in 1988, Netanyahu took his seat as a freshman MK.



Televised clash: Meridor's nebbish 'hartzuf' challenges Netanyahu's.

(Yoni Hanenschen)

But Meridor, in his own interviews, said that economics was the rationalization for the battle, not the reason. "It is strange to me that he [Netanyahu] began to be interested in the diagonal mechanism and the safety bands. In my eyes this does not seem real. It is very strange," he said.

WHEN Netanyahu returned to Israel in 1988, the "war of the camps" within the Likud was at its height. Both Netanyahu and Dan Meridor were part of the Shamir-Arens camp, which also featured the Likud "princes," the name given to that group of rising Likud stars who were grooming, and being groomed, to take control of the party: Benny Begin, Ehud Olmert, Rnani Milo, and Meridor himself.

elite, and for being the darling of the country's elite. "Although they were in the same camp, they never were together," said Vardi. "There was always tension between Netanyahu and the princes. Even at this stage. He let people understand that he was going to run for prime minister. It was well known that one day there would be a runoff."

when the surveys were showing Netanyahu badly trailing Labor candidate Shimon Peres, there was a campaign run mostly through advertisements in the newspapers calling on the Likud to dump Netanyahu, and replace him with Meridor. The name closely linked with this campaign was Geshet's David Magen, who - along with Meridor and Begin - now constitute the opposition to Netanyahu within Likud-Geshet. The Netanyahu camp viewed this as an attempted coup.

neither Meridor nor Begin would sit in the government. Netanyahu capitulated. "This was a brutal way to get the ministry," Rivlin said. It was also a horrible way to start the newest phase of the already complicated Meridor-Netanyahu relationship.

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Meridor and the other princes looked down on Netanyahu, while Netanyahu resented Meridor for being the darling of the country's elite.

-Likud MK Ruby Rivlin

Prior to the primaries for the Likud's Knesset slate, Netanyahu circulated lists of preferred candidates and pointedly left Meridor off them.

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Although she has the support of a small ultra-nationalist group which gives her a major role in Parliament, her own party may be subservient. It was also unclear if the map would be satisfactory for her.

'McLibel' decision makes hamburger of activists

LONDON Activists who have been sued by the fast-food chain McDonald's for libel over a campaign to force the company to stop testing its products on animals have won a landmark decision.

Victim of the establishment?

Is Gregory Lerner the fall guy in an Israeli conspiracy to get the Russians? A segment of the Russian community thinks so, Larry Derfner reports

I think the old-line Israeli elite is using the Lerner case to hurt Yisrael Ba'aliya and the Russians, although I don't know who exactly is behind it," maintains Simon Feldman, a journalist for the Russian-language newspaper *Novosti Nedeli* ("News of the Week"). "The elite is fighting a war because it fears competition from us. [For instance] Israeli professors are afraid that Russian immigrant professors are going to come into the universities and compete for their jobs."

Critics of "harassment" and "stigmatization" are spreading through Israel's Russian immigrant community as police broaden their investigation of suspected Russian mafia leader Zvi Ben-Ari, formerly known as Gregory Lerner. (He was jailed about a month ago on suspicion of major fraud and involvement in a murder in Russia, and of trying to bribe Israeli bank officials and politicians to further his multimillion-dollar economic interests here.)

Dov Kontorer, a columnist for the largest Russian-language newspaper, *Vesti* ("News"), said much of the Russian-language press, especially the smaller weeklies, features "very belligerent opinion pieces [on the Ben-Ari case] that accuse the Israeli establishment and police of trying to bring down every successful Russian politician and businessman. They claim that the Israeli elite doesn't want to let the Russians compete fairly in society, so it goes after Lerner and Yisrael Ba'aliya. I can't say that this is the dominant opinion in the Russian press, but it is definitely heard."

Yisrael Ba'aliya MK Yuri Stern, reportedly due to be questioned by police in the case, gave an alarming hint of the mood among Russian immigrants when, interviewed on Israel Television last weekend, he claimed the Ben-Ari affair was the latest move by the Israeli elite to "keep out the Russians, the Mizrahim, the haredim - anybody who isn't

one of them." He was quoted in *Ma'ariv* as saying, "If this treatment continues, we'll double our [current seven] Knesset seats in the next election." Stern's prediction was almost a precise echo of MK Aryeh Deri's forecast of what the Bar-On Affair would do for Shas.

Is Zvi Ben-Ari the Russians' Aryeh Deri - a criminal in the eyes of most Israelis, but a martyr in the eyes of most of his ethnic group? "A comparison can certainly be made between Lerner and Deri, in part because the claim that they are victims of persecution by the establishment is incorrect in both cases," said Kontorer, who describes himself as a "moderate" on the issue of Israeli discrimination against Russian immigrants, a bread-and-butter topic in the Russian-language press.

Kontorer suggested that Russian immigrants' attitudes on the Lerner investigation depend to a considerable extent on how successfully they themselves have integrated into Israeli society. Those who have gotten good jobs, good housing, are satisfied with their children's education, and identify with Israel tend to trust that the police are doing their work honestly, and that Ben-Ari might indeed be a criminal.

But many of the less successful, more resentful Russian immigrants who live a "ghetto" existence among others of their kind are convinced that Ben-Ari is the fall guy in an Israeli conspiracy to get the Russians.

At the Iv-Russ Russian-language bookstore on Tel Aviv's Allenby Street, clerk Sonia Maximov, 53, who came here four years ago from Moscow, said in halting Hebrew that Ben-Ari has been the victim of a "presumption of guilt" on the part of the police and the Israeli media.

"He shouldn't be called a mafioso. The courts have to rule on that," Maximov said, noting that she gets most of her news from the Russian press, but also from Israeli TV.



While the Hebrew press depicts Zvi Ben-Ari (Gregory Lerner) as a mafia king, some Russian-language newspapers portray him as a victim. (Jonathan Bloom)

She said the Ben-Ari case increased the stigmatization of Russian immigrants.

"A lot of Israelis think all Russian men are criminals and all Russian women are whores. Maybe the Israeli intelligentsia doesn't think like this, but many working-class Israelis do," she said.

At the nearby Don Quixote Russian-language bookstore, Antonina Levintant, 24, who immigrated five years ago from Moscow, said her main worry about the Ben-Ari affair was that the Russian mafia is too widespread and powerful in Israel for the police to contain it.

"There are so many of these types of people here. I'm familiar with this sort of thing from Russia," she said, noting that the Don Quixote was torched three months ago, "and we don't know who did it or why."

With her Hebrew slang and bip elegant black outfit, Levintant seemed fully integrated into youthful Tel Aviv society. She



Is Zvi Ben-Ari the Russian's Aryeh Deri - a criminal in the eyes of most Israelis but a martyr in the eyes of his ethnic group?

(Israel Sun, Ariel Jeruzolimski)

reads *Yediot Aharonot*, not the Russian press. She said the notion of a plot by the Israeli elite to oppress the Russians via Ben-Ari had never entered her mind.

But she understands how others readily latch on to the conspiracy theory: In a word, she



explains it as self-pity. "This store is like a psychological clinic; I must talk to a hundred Russians a day. They complain all the time, as if everything is so hard for them here. But believe me, they don't suffer as much as they claim."

THE EFFECT of the Ben-Ari probe has been to increase the stigmatization of Russian immigrants. But it's another thing to suggest - as many Russians do - that this is its purpose.

Feldman is currently on a month's suspension from *Novosti Nedeli* over an opinion piece he wrote accusing Israel Police investigators of teaming up with antisemitic Russian police against Ben-Ari and the Russian immigrant community.

Feldman was also criticized for maligning Israeli Sephardim as the immigrants' enemies, but he denies this was his intention. "What I did write was that there are many Israelis who hate Russian immigrants, just as there are many antisemites in Russia," he said.

Whatever Feldman's intention, the Israel Police threatened to sue *Novosti Nedeli* for libel, but dropped the threat when the newspaper printed an apology.

"There are many, many articles on Lerner in the Russian

newspapers that are much harsher than mine was," Feldman noted. "The smaller Russian-language weeklies generally cover the case 'with a lot of passion, but little factual information,' Kontorer said.

But even *Vesti*, the most "Israeli-oriented" of the local Russian-language papers, reprinted a column written in Russia by Alexander Bovin, the previous ambassador to Israel, which charged that the Ben-Ari investigation "was part of an international effort to stop Russia from integrating into the global economy," Kontorer said.

While Yuri Stern's assessment of the case's value in Knesset seats was likely a hopeful exaggeration, Kontorer said the affair "isn't hurting Yisrael Ba'aliya's popularity at all." As for what the investigation will do for Ben-Ari's own reputation in the community, this won't be known until his legal fate is decided.

Kontorer, who thinks the evidence against Ben-Ari is very weak, guesses that he may eventually get convicted on a minor charge, or possibly even escape indictment altogether, which would leave him "not badly off" in the court of Russian-immigrant public opinion. "But if he is brought to trial and found innocent," Kontorer maintained, "then he's going to come out of this thing a hero."

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Return to Oslo

The ambassador of the country that hosted the secret Oslo talks is heading home. Sven Erik Svedman speaks to Jay Bushinsky about Norway's role in the peace process

Roaming ambassadors usually dart from country to country, dropping in on kings, presidents and ministers, but Norway's outgoing envoy to Israel, Sven Erik Svedman, oscillated between Tel Aviv, Gaza and Jerusalem, often covering 180 kilometers a day in his official four-wheel-drive vehicle.

The 50-year-old diplomat functioned here as the Oslo Accords' godfather, constantly checking implementation and, above all, supervising the Palestinian Authority's use of the \$200 million aid program allocated by the Norwegians for the first five years of the PA's existence.

Svedman, a tall and youthful Scandinavian whose veneer of amiability and diplomatic elegance cover a sharp and realistic understanding of Middle Eastern politics and culture, was in on the secrets of Oslo from the start.

As minister and deputy chief of mission at Norway's embassy in Washington, he was aware that Israeli and Palestinian representatives were conducting clandestine talks in his nation's capital under the personal auspices of his chief, the late foreign minister Johan Jorgen Holst.

The Americans knew something was going on, but they didn't know exactly what it was," he recalled.

He also remembered their attitude when Norway's role became clear. At first, his State Department contacts were surprised and skeptical, but not miffed or resentful, he said.

Some expressed astonishment that a country as geographically and historically remote from the Middle East as Norway would dare play the role of peacemaker. "We know the region well," he was told by his American counterparts, "but do you?"

Ireland, Guatemala and elsewhere to seek out its diplomatic skills.

Svedman inadvertently revealed the impetus for the Norwegian initiative when he flashed back to his nation's relatively short, but dramatic, history.

Norway was under Danish rule for 400 years, beginning in the 15th century, and then entered into a union with Sweden which lasted from 1814 to 1905. These political arrangements may have been benign and even convenient in material terms, "but they were not viable from the standpoint of national identity," he said.

"You can unleash negative forces by sacking to integration."

The implication was clear. The Palestinians' national aspirations seemed to be on the tip of his tongue. At the very least, Norway could understand their year for self-determination.

And then he came out with a concept in political science which demands serious reflection: "The smaller the state, the more preoccupied it is with national identity, sovereignty and independence."

All this, he said, while speaking of Norway being a country of only 4.2 million inhabitants, but one whose independence is the sine qua non of its existence.

He attributed the country's ability to produce an Israeli-Palestinian agreement to the fact that Norway had good relations with both parties - with Israel since 1948 and with the Palestine Liberation Organization since its admission to the Socialist International in the mid-1970s.

Norway also had a unique insight into Israel's national ethos because it was conquered and occupied by Nazi Germany during World War II and because it is a young nation in chronological terms, he said.

"We could identify with the Jewish struggle," he added, noting that "there is enormous interest in Israel in Norway."

This fascination evidently is nurtured in Norway's schools.

He remembers two maps on the classroom walls during his days as a student, one of Norway and the other of Israel. The reason: Norway's state religion, Lutheranism, required that Norwegians be familiar with the Holy Land, where Christianity was born.

SVEDMAN'S two-and-a-half-year stint as Norway's envoy to Israel began in an atmosphere of euphoria. He remembers



Signing of the Israel-PLO accord in Washington, September 13, 1993. Norway paved the way.

(Brunnman/Hasari)

joining the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, then-foreign minister Shimon Peres and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat on the plane that took them to the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony. "We were working with a government that was part of Oslo - one which literally was Oslo!" he said.

"After the new [Likud-led] government was elected and confirmed that it wanted to carry Oslo forward, we respected the democratic choice of the Israeli electorate."

But once the Oslo Accords were born, Norway's role changed, Svedman said. "There no longer was any need for secret negotiations," he said. "The parties met often and with the public's knowledge, while our role shifted more toward the economic field."

Ultimately, Norway became the main coordinator of the international aid that was bestowed upon the Palestinians, facilitating monetary transfers and keeping abreast of its utilization in the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

"We have a representative office in Gaza which is monitoring our aid program and we are satisfied that the Palestinians are doing their utmost to clarify these fiscal issues," he said. He expressed total confidence in the two special panels set up by the PA to this end.

"There have been problems, but they have been isolated and solved," insisted Svedman. He would not address the issue of fiscal irregularities that led to the resignation of the PA attorney-general. A PA report concluded that more than \$40 million had vanished from the account books and that much of it may have ended up in private Palestinian hands.

Svedman would only say that from now on "there must be transparency - that it should be possible to see where the money is going - and accountability where we can monitor usage."

On the other hand, he considers other economic problems crucial to the PA's success: the effect of periodical and prolonged



Outgoing Norwegian Ambassador Sven Erik Svedman

border closures on the Palestinian inhabitants' livelihoods and the "lack of continuity" between the two

1,400 Jews who lived in Norway before the war, half were deported to the death camps and most of them perished there, while the other half were transferred to the safety of neutral Sweden. Recently, a commission was established consisting

"Oslo doesn't preclude anything. It's just a continuous framework in which both sides can consider their needs and rights."

-Svedman

areas under PA administration, the West Bank and Gaza Strip - a situation that crimps marketing prospects for local producers as well as easy accessibility from

one area to the other.

On the bilateral level, Svedman believes his government has resolved the issue of Jewish property claims emanating from the Nazi occupation. Of the

of representatives of the Jewish community and the World Jewish Congress to expedite all property claims.

Svedman's personal plans are set and secure. He is taking a three-year leave of absence from the diplomatic corps to become managing director of the oil, energy and off-shore industries and is looking forward to joining his 20-year-old son who remained in Norway to pursue his studies. With him in Israel were his wife and two daughters, one 13 and the other 18.

"After the new [Likud-led] government was elected and confirmed that it wanted to carry Oslo forward, we respected the democratic choice of the Israeli electorate."

-Svedman

NORWAY'S initial success lay in producing the seminal Oslo Accords.

The ambassador rejects the notion that the Oslo Accords impose any specific political arrangement on the parties. "Oslo doesn't preclude anything," he said. "It's just a continuous framework in which both sides can consider their needs and rights."

"I believe in it because there is no alternative."

The Oslo Accords catapulted Norway into the first rank of the world's troubleshooters and led contending parties in

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"A general feeling of disappointment and depression abounds."

— Rivka Michaeli



"I prefer to pack my things and go to a place that I care less about. Then it just won't hurt me."

— Shaika Levy



"During terror attacks Levy stayed in the country and now he wants to leave."

— Sefi Rivlin

Leave 'em laughing or just leave?

It's not often that the country's president invites you over for a drink to talk about your problems. But that's what happens when part of a national institution threatens to leave the country.

Shaika Levy, one of the three members of the legendary Hagashash Hahiver — the most celebrated comedy team in the country's history — wasn't joking last week during a bitter interview with Yedior Aharonor's local newspapers, in which he declared that since the assassination of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and Binyamin Netanyahu's election he didn't feel he belonged in Israel anymore, and that he was seriously considering emigration.

The day after the interview was published, President Ezer Weizman phoned Levy and invited him to "Come over, sit and talk to me over a glass of whiskey or coffee. I want to know what pains you."

It's nothing new for prominent entertainment and cultural figures who identify with the Left to pronounce their dissatisfaction with government policy when the Likud is in power. But few mainstream figures express their disgust as bluntly as Levy did.

"I prefer to pack my things and go to a place that I care less about," he said in the newspaper interview. "Then it just won't hurt me. I'll see what's going on in Israel on CNN. I'll go to Las

Vegas, stay there, buy myself a house cheaply; it's not expensive there. A clean place, a quiet place, a relaxing place, with a cultural life. I won't get upset anymore."

Coincidentally, just a few days afterwards, local rock idol Aviv Gefen, currently living in London, told the *Observer* newspaper that he had chosen to live abroad for political reasons.

"When I was in Israel I could see the blood and smell the gunfire. When they started to shoot in the name of God, I knew that

"Since Rabin's assassination, the light has gone out, the well is empty."

— Shaika Levy

Israel was not a place to live. The right wing there wants to turn Israel into Iran," Gefen said, choosing not to stress, as he had in the Israeli press, that he was in England to pursue an international music career.

Gefen's words might have been strong, but were not shocking; he is certainly not the first young Israeli rocker to seek success abroad and he has built a career on breaking taboos and

Comedian Shaika Levy shocked many last week when he said he felt like leaving the country. How black is the mood among entertainers? Allison Kaplan Sommer reports

fighting the establishment.

But Levy's interview came as much more of a surprise. No 20-something rock artist like Gefen, he is a 56-year-old entrenched member of the cultural and entertainment establishment, who wields considerable power as the chairman of EMI, the national performing artists union.

Now, suddenly, Levy has declared that it is impossible for him to create comedy when he is so depressed about the direction in which the country is going and in which he "goes to sleep every night feeling helpless."

"It is not the same country since Rabin's assassination," he said. "Look at what is happening with the religious. Look at what is happening with the violence. Look at what is happening to tolerance. With the peace negotiations. Nothing. It doesn't exist. Everyone has retreated to his own side. As if the whole business is about to shut down tomorrow..."

"When Rabin was around, there was a relaxed feeling. We were going in a direction where there was a light at the end of the

tunnel. I said to myself: there are problems, but we're going in the right direction, we have a goal. But now the light has gone out, the well is empty."

He complained that "People who are different from me, who think completely differently from the way I think, are running the country. They are making decisions and I cannot do anything about it. That's democracy, but it is sad and very difficult..."

"You look at your prime minister and you say: He doesn't belong to me. He isn't an Israeli at all. He doesn't belong to us, he belongs to America... A prime minister of Israel who aspired to an American passport? People are dying in all kinds of military operations and he wanders around skiing in I-don't-know-where? Where have you heard of such a thing? The man does not belong to us. He is not one of us."

Levy attributes much of his sense of doom to the growth of the religious Right — "a bigger problem than the Arabs" — and fears their power and influence will only strengthen as they become a growing proportion of the population. That influence has and will hurt the cultural life as well as the political direction

of the country, he added.

IS THE mood truly so black among those who make their living laughing, singing, writing and otherwise keeping the nation entertained? Among much of the entertainment and cultural community, the answer is yes.

Comedian and talk-show host Rivka Michaeli says that Levy said publicly what she has heard privately: "a general feeling of disappointment and depression abounds," she says.

She believes that women performers in particular fear being "controlled and dictated to" by religious forces, which she says form "an ideological threat" and will want to tell them when and where they can perform, what they should wear and whether or not to sing.

"And moreover, look, Sinead O'Connor won't come to Israel because she is feeling threatened — what does this say? That anyone who identifies with peace, with the Palestinian people, can't come here because their life is in danger? What's next?" she asks.

Musician Shlomo Gronich said he also discerns a "desperation, fear, and helplessness that didn't exist in the past... I understand

and sympathize with what Shaika Levy said... what is happening is very frightening and if the situation doesn't change very quickly, we can find ourselves in a country we don't know."

Author A.B. Yehoshua makes a distinction between the current malaise and opposition to past Likud governments.

"Listen, with [Menachem] Begin, with Golda [Meir], even when we opposed them, there was a vision, a hope that we would get to the top of the mountain and talk to the Palestinians and there will be

"Does Shaika mean to say he enjoyed the days when buses were exploding and people were dying?"

— Sefi Rivlin

peace. "Well, now it feels as if we were at the top of the mountain, and then we came down again... we had a dream and it was realized... now we seem to be sliding backwards, and there is frustration and depression, as if something beautiful has been contaminated."

"Many people, including me, are very tired of the political struggle, and don't have the strength to start again. What do we fight for? To talk to the PLO — well, we talk to them — Bibi talks to Arafat. Give them a state? Well, they are flying their flag. "But still it all seems to be going wrong — we're going backwards, but not back to where we were before — to a new, scarier place."

TO BE sure, not every performer

or artist rallies around Levy. Fellow comic Sefi Rivlin, who identifies with the right of the political map, says that Levy, who he considers to be a good friend, "didn't make me angry by what he said, but certainly shocked me and definitely disappointed me."

"Does Shaika mean to say that he enjoyed the times we were having a few years ago when the country was subject to terrorist attacks and buses were exploding and people were dying? During those times he stayed in the country and only now he wants to leave?" he asked.

Rivlin objects strongly to many of Levy's comments, most particularly to his attacks on Netanyahu and his government. "What is this business of Bibi not being 'one of us'?" For goodness sake, Ben-Gurion was from Russia, Begin was from Poland, Golda Meir had an American accent. Were they foreigners? How many generations was Ehud Barak's family living in Israel? Not many more than Bibi's, that's for sure.

"And how can you say that when times are tough you can't write comedy? I bet if you did an analysis of the best work of the Gashash, you'd find that some of their classic material was written when times were very hard — just before the Six Day War, just after the Yom Kippur War. I just don't buy it; you can write funny material during hard times when what is going on politically upsets you, and there are other times when things are wonderful and fine and you still can't write."

Ever the entertainer, the quick-witted Rivlin couldn't resist making a quip. "Well, I guess if he leaves the country I have to go, too. I'm a member of EMI, after all, and I have to follow my chairman. Bye-bye."

As for Levy himself, in the wake of the media storm around him, he left for an extended vacation in the south of France. Presumably, he purchased a round-trip ticket.



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مكازم الأهل

MIDDLE ISRAEL



By AMOTZ ASA-EL

Real nobility is based on scorn, courage, and profound indifference, wrote French author Albert Camus more than half a century ago.

In the case of Dan Meridor, that statement could hardly be more accurate, considering his scorn for power struggles, his courage in facing other people's power, and the unbearable apathy with which he approaches his own power base.

YET MERIDOR also embodies the local equivalent of nobility in the more technical sense.

First, as son of the late MK Elyahu Meridor, he was born into what passes here for royalty. Then, as cabinet secretary for Menachem Begin - Meridor senior's comrade-in-arms - he was silver-spooned into a world of top-secrecy that others must fight tooth and nail to join.

so beautiful."

And so, it is perhaps no coincidence that accumulating power - not to mention actually exerting it - never seemed to thrill the baby-faced Jerusalem attorney. Why build up power if it comes your way anyhow? And why strive to be No. 1, if the powers that be in any case won't make a move without first consulting you?

Indeed, in his failure to foam at the mouth in face of bellicose rivals, Meridor is very much like Labor's Yossi Beilin, whose political career, incidentally, also began as cabinet secretary. And Meridor's cool attitude toward the loss of his ministerial perks is reminiscent of Labor MK Uzi Baram's rejection of a cabinet seat in the 1988 unity government, which he thought should not have been established.

YET WITH all due respect to his "princely" lineage and courtly privilege, Meridor is also a gifted man. In fact, in the aftermath of this typically Israeli week of below-the-belt micro-politics disguised as highbrow macro-economics, the studious, balanced, modest and sober Meridor looms tall as the meretricious antithesis to Benjamin Netanyahu's machismo-craziness.

Yes, hovering in the background of the Netanyahu-Meridor relationship there was a true policy issue to be settled. And Meridor's stance in the dispute was the more economically dubious one, since he had all but adopted the big-business quest for a weaker shekel. Still, though he was, and remains, wrong in assuming that high interest rates and low inflation would fatally suppress growth and immigration, Meridor's concerns were purely professional and genuinely national.

Netanyahu's agenda was, of course, different. Don't believe him when he says he was motivated by "the urgency of the economic situation." There are numerous other urgent economic issues smoldering on the premier's back burners, from the Brodet Report on reforming the capital markets to the breaking-up of the electricity and transportation monopolies.

Yes, the Bank of Israel's exchange-rate mechanism did call for some alteration, since it had led to excessive dollar purchases, which in turn made our foreign currency reserves climb to an all-time high of \$16 billion. But as it turned out, Meridor and Frenkel did find their middle ground Monday night, only to learn that Netanyahu - who had earlier urged them to hammer out a compromise - suddenly changed his mind and insisted "that a clear-cut decision be taken."

Any moron can understand what really lurked behind that sudden resolve and change of course, particularly with it coming after a year in which the prime minister repeatedly ignored, humiliated, double-crossed and outflanked his finance minister.

The highlights of those maneuvers included robbing the Treasury of its responsibility for state companies; deleting items from the budget to placate populist coalition partners and informing the finance minister about those decisions in a speech delivered from the Knesset podium; shelving the capital-market reform plan, also for populist considerations, through a press conference delivered by Avigdor Lieberman, a bureaucrat who is supposed to have no say in the issue; and, this week, leading to the media his decision to adopt a currency reform without coordinating that move with Meridor.

FINALLY, PUSH came to shove and Meridor, the ultimate prince, decided to throw in the towel and do what he had done as an armored-corps officer, but never as a politician: Fight.

Meridor, of course, is not programmed to challenge an Israeli prime minister, let alone one who represents the Likud. In fact, he often seems like the biblical David who, though having located King Saul sound asleep in a Judean

Desert cave, merely ripped away a piece of his pursuer's uniform, and otherwise refrained from touching him. "How can I hurt God's choice?" asked David rhetorically, in reply to his bellicose soldiers' prodding to once and for all do away with his nemesis.

Netanyahu, having been crowned by a terrorism-stricken public thirsting for a strongman, is indeed our very own King Saul. Not in terms of that peasant's sensitivity - if anything, in his frequent moments of conceit he seems more like Nero fiddling above the Rome he has set ablaze - but in terms of that unskilled ruler's jealousy when faced with potential rivals.

Saul was originally a modest man, but the increasingly popular, post-Goliath David insinuated in the first Israelite monarch a jealousy he could not contain. So much so, that when David once played the harp while leaning against the wall opposite the throne, a tragically depressed Saul suddenly lifted his spear and rocketed it in the Psalmist's direction, shouting "I'm going to hit David and the wall!"

Dry Bones



SHABBAT SHALOM



Parasha: Beha'aloicha

Daily dedication of the menorah

By SHLOMO RISKIN

"And God spoke unto Moses, saying: 'Speak to Aaron and say to him, 'When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall illuminate the menorah.'"

(Num. 8:1)

The second chapter of Zechariah - discussing the dedication of the menorah, or candelabrum, at the establishment of the Second Temple - serves not only as the haftara of this week's portion of Beha'aloicha, but also as the haftara of Shabbat Hanukka. The reason for linking Hanukka to our portion is ostensibly because this week's text opens with God's commandment concerning the menorah, as quoted above.

The linkage, however, may be more than symbolic. After all, the commandment to kindle the menorah was originally cited in the Book of Exodus. Could the entire reference to the menorah in our portion be prophetic, actually relating to the rededication by the Hasmoneans during the period of the Second Temple? So suggests Nahmanides in reacting to an interpretation by Rashi.

Rashi asks why the commandment to light the menorah follows immediately after the description of the "dedication offerings" of the 12 tribal heads at the end of last week's portion of Nasso?

His answer is based on a psychological issue. Rashi says that when Aaron saw the dedication of the menorah, "his mind grew weak" (halsha da'ato), since neither he nor his tribe had been granted a role in the ceremonies. To comfort him, God tells Aaron that he will give him a commandment "greater than theirs, for you shall light and clean the lamps." (Rashi 8:2)

Nahmanides finds Rashi's approach perplexing. Why would the lighting and cleaning of lamps compensate Aaron for his exclusion from the dedication service?

Nahmanides therefore suggests that our portion hints at the pivotal role Aaron's descendants played at the time of Hanukka: after all, Judah Maccabee's family, from the tribe of Aaron, were responsible for the victory over the Hellenists, as well as for the miracle of the oil which burned for eight days. Aaron and his sons may not have participated in the desert dedication, but they were paid back in spades when they were the driving force behind the Temple's rededication at the time of Hanukka.

The Ohr Hahaim (1696-1743) also asks why lighting and cleaning the menorah would restore the "weakened mind" of Aaron. His explanation, however, is related to the nature of the menorah's lamps themselves.

He cites a Talmudic passage dealing with the care of the menorah: "Every day they would remove the lamps of the menorah and place them inside the Tent of Meeting, clean them completely, and place the oil inside them." (B.T. Menachot 88b) The Ohr Hahaim deduces, therefore, that the menorah was not a solid fixture.

He further proves it from a biblical verse: "And they shall take a cloth of blue wool, and cover the candlestick of the light and its lamps, and its oil cups, and its

tongs, and its pans and all its oil vessels..." (Num. 4:9) He explains that if the menorah's sections could not come apart, the Torah would not speak of the candlestick and then further catalog the lamps, cups and tongs. In his words: "They would be part of the menorah, and there would be no need to detail them."

We now understand why the service of the menorah was so special, and brought comfort to Aaron. The daily act of taking down the lamps, cleaning them, and then returning each piece to its place meant effectively rebuilding the menorah each day. Thus, every day he would be re-dedicating the menorah!

Hence, while the experience of the tribal princes was limited to a single and one-time dedication, Aaron and his descendants were given the opportunity to be involved in a daily dedication.

Although the Ohr Hahaim does not deal with Hanukka per se, his explanation adds a deeper level to our understanding of the festival. It is important to remember that the Torah section read each day of Hanukka corresponds to the daily dedications and offerings brought by the tribal leaders. And although the initial rabbinic enactment was that each family should light one candle during each of the eight days of Hanukka, those who desire to beautify and enhance the light add a candle each night until they reach eight lights (B.T. Shabbat 22a).

It seems to me that the rabbis are implying that each day of the miracle must be seen as a new experience; that we dare not take God's gifts for granted, even if they are repeated day after day. The renewed and rededicated menorah lamps are reflected in the renewed and rededicated Hanukka lights; the priests rejoice in a renewed act of service each day, and every Jew must rejoice in God's renewed miracle of creation!

Moreover, the menorah symbolizes the Torah and its commandments: Ki ner mitzvo v'Torah ohr... Because the lamp is the mitzva, and Torah is the light (Proverbs 6:23). If the menorah is the mitzva, then not only must Aaron rededicate the menorah, he has to rededicate the Torah every day, turning every commandment into a new experience!

As our portion opens, Aaron has just participated in the dedication of the Sanctuary, each tribal leader presenting the sacrifices and offerings of his tribe over the course of 12 days. Evidently, this experience was so significant that the Bible records the process 12 separate times, repeating virtually the exact words each time. The only way to justify such repetition is to assume that spirits were so exalted, sensitivities so ennobled, that even the same offering as was made the day before was felt as a new adventure.

This, explains the Ohr Hahaim, must be our attitude toward Torah, the light of our lives. Aaron appreciated the service of the lights above all others because it involved a daily renewal. So must we approach our daily service to God, for only then will we serve a living God with living rituals.

Shabbat Shalom

King Saul returns

And so, it is perhaps no coincidence that accumulating power - not to mention actually exerting it - never seemed to thrill the baby-faced Jerusalem attorney. Why build up power if it comes your way anyhow? And why strive to be No. 1, if the powers that be in any case won't make a move without first consulting you?

Of 'heretics' and idolators

which our ancestors indulged en route from Egypt to the Promised Land (Sanhedrin 60b and 64a; Bemidbar Rabba 20:23; Numbers 25:3, 5; Hosea 9:10; Psalms 106:28 et al.)

Describing the Western Wall as "the Jewish people's holiest place," as Jerusalem's Deputy Mayor Haim Miller (Agudat Yisrael) did in justifying the hooliganism, is to falsify history and affirm a widespread misconception that has made the stones of the Wall objects of idolatry.

"The Jewish people's holiest place" is not the Western Wall but the Temple Mount, specifically the area that in antiquity was occupied by the Temple and the Holy of Holies. The Western Wall is part of what remains of the wall Herod king of Judea built to retain the fill he had poured to broaden the compound. It is the closest our politicians, and therefore also our Chief Rabbinate, permit us to approach the site of the Temple itself.

Be that as it may, those "heretical" worshippers, if they are indeed guilty of heresy, were nowhere near the Wall. I hope that by this reading we shall have heard especially from the spokesmen of that sector of Orthodoxy who identify themselves as "haredim of d'var Hashem" for God's word (Isaiah 66:2; see also Ezra 10:3 and II Kings 4:13), in whose garb those hooligans were disguised.

Whatever one may think of the Conservative and Reform approaches to God or observance, there is no justification for the behavior of those pseudo-haredim idolators wearing masks of Torah. Those who are truly haredim in Isaiah's sense and believe that the sum of Torah is Hillel's lesson of common decency and civility must reject with revulsion the excuse offered by Miller, "When something bothers you badly, you sometimes lose control" (Ha'aretz, June 12).

What is more, Miller added that "the very coming of the Conservatives ... was

an act of provocation." Deputy Religious Affairs Minister Yigal Bibi resorted to the outrageous "if" and waseled a slap on the wrist to the hooligans: "If [the 'heretics'] held a mixed service and spoiled the holiday for the regular worshippers, then it was a provocative act. But still, people shouldn't take the law into their own hands."

What law? What law of the land did those non-Orthodox Jews violate, what provocation did they stage, by conducting a service far from the regular prayer section?

If they did transgress, have we now handed over the maintenance of law and order to "bothered" vigilantes?

For that matter, what heinous halachic sin, what grave offense against God, did they commit?

If they did grievously offend God, who deputized the idolators to be God's marshals?

After the police intervened, those worshippers of Mercury and Peor went on a general rampage against Arabs and Arab vehicles and business premises in the Old City, in the course of which they also buried stones at Border Police.

Some of them also attacked a young Jewish couple in the street near the Damascus Gate. The man wore a crocheted kippa and the woman wore a blouse bearing the emblem of the late Rabbi Meir Kahane's Kach organization. But this "didn't" prevent the attack, "the Ha'aretz" reporter famously added.

Deputy Health Minister Shlomo Benizri, Shas chairman Aryeh Deri's alter ego, challenged the veracity of the reports of the incident, saying, "There is no doubt in my mind that no haredim harmed any vehicles on the boly day."

He called the story about the attack against the non-Orthodox worshippers "poppycock."

Joining in that Shavuot idolatrous fantasia were denizens of some of the city's Ashkeezazi baredi neighborhoods near the

Old City and the feces-throwing pupils of the Porat Yosef Yeshiva in the Old City, the doyen and once the pride of Jerusalem's Sephardi yeshivot. Now we know how the latter spent the night. (See also Yediot Aharonot and The Jerusalem Post of June 12.)

ON THE Monday before Shavuot, Shas staged a mass revival meeting in Tel Aviv. One of the main speakers was Rabbi David Yosef, son of Shas' nestor and former Sephardi chief rabbi Ovadia Yosef.

Yosef Jr. delivered a harangue that surely must have done his father proud. Claiming that since the founding of Shas "half a million Jews have returned to the tent of Torah," he added, "Half a million secularists use drugs. So see what is in the scales: our half-million penitents vs. their stoned half-million."

Yosef's words seem quite clear, unambiguous. According to Shas chairman Aryeh Deri, his words should not be taken at face value: "Rabbi David Yosef didn't mean to offend anyone. Actually, he called for national unity and reconciliation. They are all our brothers. The secularists need not feel frustrated or offended as a result of Rabbi David Yosef's words."

Deri added, "There is no censorship to Shas, and his style is a bit different. Maybe he got carried away somewhat and should have expressed himself differently." (See Mo'oriv and Yediot Aharonot, June 10.)

THE HOPE for the above-mentioned kind of condemnation is as forlorn, I suppose, as the hope for a similar condemnation by Arab spokesmen and spokeswomen of the murderous physical and verbal violence of many of their colleagues and constituents.

(E-mail comments to: moshe@post.co.il)

A VIEW FROM NOV



By MOSHE KOHN

By the time you read this, I hope the spokesmen of all sectors of Orthodox Jewry will have joined their non-Orthodox counterparts in vigorously and categorically denouncing the idolatrous behavior of several dozen godless hooligans acting in the name of Torah in the Western Wall Plaza on Shavuot morning, Wednesday, June 11.

By the same token, I hope that non-Orthodox and Orthodox alike, Jews and non-Jews, will by now have with equal vigor denounced the similar behavior of dozens of youths in Rishon Lezion who spent the afternoon and evening of Shavuot Eve bombarding passing vehicles with garbage, wooden planks and freshly filled bags of urine. Their rampage was presumably a post-Jewish extension of an old Shavuot custom of people sprieking each other with rose water (Ma'ariv, July 13).

The idolators I refer to are those who desecrated the anniversary of the giving of the Torah by throwing stones, bags of feces, garbage and other objects, and flinging epithets like "Nazis" and "whores," at a group of more than 50 Conservative and Reform Jewish men and women culminating their Shavuot-night study vigil with a prayer service at the rear of the upper plaza.

I call them idolators for two main reasons: - An ancient Roman form of idolatry was throwing stones at the statue of the god Mercury, and dropping one's feces before a shrine to the Moabite god Baal Peor was another form of idolatry, in

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Christian missionaries... attacks left country... leave? - Sefi Rivlin

SHARANSKY

Continued from Page 1

Barak, who held consultations in his Tel Aviv office last night with 11 other Labor MKs, including former party chairman Shimon Peres, has also decided not to join a Netanyahu government under any circumstances.

Labor faction chairman Ra'anan Cohen is initiating meetings with members of the Third Way and Yisrael Ba'aliya to try to persuade them to support the motions of no-confidence submitted by Labor, Meretz, Hadash and the Democratic Arah Party. "Even in the coalition, the understanding and recognition of the need for new elections is becoming sharper," Cohen said.

Although no-confidence motions are usually heard on Mondays, an exception has been made next week, because they would clash with the scheduled Likud internal elections. The motions will be heard on Tuesday instead.

Both Cohen and coalition chairman Michael Eltan are calling on MKs who are abroad to return for the vote, and announced the cancellation of all "pairing-off" agreements between absent opposition and coalition MKs. MKs have also been told to cancel foreign trips next week.

Meretz faction chairman Haim Oron said he will monitor the no-confidence votes to decide whether to go ahead with a Meretz bill calling for the dissolution of the Knesset and early elections. It is due to be heard on Wednesday. Oron, who submitted the bill, said: "This is the only way to publicly test the declarations of coalition MKs who have said that they have lost faith in the prime minister. The only way out of the political and moral crisis we are in is to dissolve the Knesset and hold early elections."

Perhaps the most worrisome development for Netanyahu yes-

terday was the fact that MK David Re'em (Likud) announced he is launching a campaign called "Yes to the Likud, no to Bibi." Re'em said that "should the opportunity arise to bring down the government and call early elections, I would vote against the government, and I am sure that with a new leader the Likud would win the elections. Netanyahu has been disloyal not only to his friends, but also to the Likud ideals. He has decided to rid himself of the true Likud representatives, which is why he fired Benny [Ze'ev] Begin and then he fired Dan Meridor and who knows who he'll fire next - [Defense Minister] Yitzhak Mordechai and [Communications Minister] Limor Livnat, maybe. He fires anyone he dislikes."

Health Minister Yehoshua Matza took Re'em to task yesterday, wondering "where he came up with these absurdities. Netanyahu over fired Begin, who left [the government] to protest the Hebron agreement. Meridor quit over an economic issue, no one forced him to quit."

Re'em, however, refused to undertake that he would indeed vote against the government in the confidence motion before the Knesset next week. Meridor himself also refused to say what he would do in that vote.

But in theory the in-house opposition to Netanyahu now numbers four - Begin, Meridor, David Magoz of Gesher, and Re'em. This brings the Netanyahu coalition down to a dangerous 62 out of 120 MKs - 61 votes are needed for a no-confidence motion to pass. If the motions pass, new elections would have to be held for both the Knesset and the prime minister. Some 20 no-confidence motions have been defeated since the government took office last year.

NE'EMAN

Continued from Page 1

Hanegbi reiterated yesterday his emphatic refusal to switch portfolios. "If the prime minister does not want me to serve in my present capacity, it will be no disaster. I don't have to be in the government. I can serve as an ordinary MK and I will be a loyal one," Hanegbi said.

"I will support the government," he said.

Hanegbi denied that he was given the portfolio on condition it would be returned to Ne'eman should he extricate himself from his legal travails, as he did.

Strengthening the Likud representation in his cabinet should help Netanyahu dissipate the storm caused by Dan Meridor's resignation.

However, at least one source claims that Ne'eman is inclined to return to the government, a fact which could stymie Netanyahu's next plan.

Netanyahu would like to wrap-up his cabinet reshuffle as soon as he can to prevent any further instability to his coalition. The Meridor resignation encouraged talk of early elections from several quarters yesterday and triggered insurrection by MKs who feel their individual power has increased as the overall size of the coalition diminishes.

Some of this rebellious spirit may be evident at today's cabinet session, which some ministers promise will be stormy.

The ministers who were absent from the special Tuesday cabinet session at which Meridor resigned - Yitzhak Mordechai, Limor Livnat, and Yitzhak Levy - are expected to attend today's meeting. Mordechai has already told Netanyahu's aides that he will back him.

Meridor's resignation went into effect early this morning, exactly 48 hours after it was tendered.

IRAN

Continued from Page 1

Khatami is scheduled to enter office in August.

Diplomatic sources said Syria has also entered into the offensive. As the Shura members were meeting in Beirut, the sources said, Bashar Assad, the son of President Hafez Assad, met with Hizbullah leader Hassan Nasrallah.

The sources said the two men decided to attack Turkish targets.

The sources said they did not know whether action against Israel was discussed. Hizbullah has tried to promote joint Arab action against Turkey and Israel. Nasrallah, the diplomatic sources said, recently informed his colleagues in the Shi'ite organization that Iran, Syria and Iraq have decided to cooperate to help radical Islamic opposition groups in Turkey. Nasrallah said Hizbullah would participate in this campaign, but was not specific.

The decisions of joint Arab action against Turkey come as Syria has decided to open its border with Iraq after 17 years. The border was closed when Baghdad severed relations with Damascus, which supported Iraq during its war with Iraq in the 1980s.

Douglas Davis adds from London:

The Arabic-language media are alive with interest over the developing rapprochement between Syria and Iraq. It is believed the Syrians are being impelled by the perceived threat of an Israeli-Turkish alliance.

They are said to be moving cautiously in an attempt to avoid ruffling Washington's feathers, while simultaneously focusing Washington's attention on Syrian needs. Developments so far, however, have been sufficient to alarm Iraqi dissidents who had sought a safe haven in Syria and are now seeking refuge elsewhere.

FRANCE

Continued from Page 1

According to the sources, Israel is requesting that the Lebanese government take full responsibility for the security situation on its side of the border by moving its army into the security zone.

Israel also wants a clear guarantee for the safety of South Lebanese Army soldiers and their families.

The sources said that Richard promised to raise the request with the government and that the French defense establishment would examine all its aspects.

In recent months, the French press has reported that former Defense Ministry director-general David Levy, a senior adviser to Mordechai, has been conducting a series of secret meetings here with members of the French defense establishment about an arrangement in south Lebanon in which France would be involved.

After his meeting with Richard, Mordechai said that he had asked the French to examine ways in which they could assist the peace process between Israel and Lebanon.

"I didn't speak about specifics," he said. "I noted that France has close ties with Lebanon, and also the ability to influence the Lebanese and the Syrians."

GRAPEVINE



Michal Isaacs (left), Yossi Siyas, and Sara Netanyahu

Power brunch

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

For her gala birthday brunch on the Dan Pearl Hotel, Jerusalem, insurance broker Michal Isaacs, who chairs the Professional and Career Women's Forum, asked guests not to bring gifts but to give donations to Life Line (Kav LeChaim), an organization which devotes itself to caring for sick children, especially those with cancer, cerebral palsy and muscular dystrophy.

Among her many friends who generously responded to the cause were Sara Netanyahu, who noted that one of the most important mitzvot in Judaism is helping the sick, Life Line president and wife of the interior minister Ahuva Suissa, Tzipi Ishai, wife of the minister of labor and social affairs, MK Naomi Blumenthal, Ludmilla Tichon, wife of the Knesset Speaker, prominent lawyer and socialite Tami Raveh and most of the capital's social elite.

Even though it was a Friday morning, most of the guests arrived on time. Stella Hadas, wife of former Foreign Ministry director-general Yossi Hadas, attributed the punctuality to the fact that Jerusalem housewives no longer knock themselves out to prepare for Shabbat. With ready-made foods so easily available, they just pick up what they need from the take-out stores and have more time to spend on their own pleasure.

Men were few and far between. Even Israel Isaacs, who heads the Jerusalem Economic Forum and does almost everything in partnership with his wife, was absent on this occasion. However, Life Line founder Turia Levenstein did make an appearance to explain how much pleasure the organization was able to provide sick children through its summer camps here and in the US. Radio personality Yossi Siyas was also present.

Popescu was slightly peeved because he was one of several new ambassadors who presented their credentials on the same day as Bogdanov, with only the Russian ambassador receiving media attention.

South African ambassador Frank Land and his wife Maatchien did a split roster. He went to the Russian do, while she attended the Philippines reception where he joined her towards the tail end. Other latecomers to the Philippines event were nattily attired Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi, who obligingly gave the local paparazzi a series of photo opportunities, and casually dressed Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo, who, when propelled forward by property developer and newly appointed Philippines Honorary Consul Alfred Akkroy, apologized profusely for his tardiness, saying "better late than never."

BETTER late than never was equally appropriate to the reception hosted earlier on the same day by Australian ambassador Ian Witcock and his wife Tamara for Paul Morawetz, the initiator of the Hephzibah Menuhin Chair at the Rubin Music Academy. The reception, which was originally to have been hosted by Wilcock's predecessor Peter Rogers, was deferred when Morawetz took ill.

As it happens, Wilcock went to school with the guest of honor's son, David, so it was more fitting for him to do something for Morawetz. But more than that, Wilcock is a collector and accumulator of, among other things, concert programs.

In 1962, he went to a concert given by Hephzibah and Yehudi Menuhin and kept the program, which is still in mint condition. It now belongs to Morawetz, who, though a resident of Australia, described himself as rootless but able to feel at home anywhere in the world. Since he was born in Austria and educated in Prague, Austrian ambassador Herbert Kroll and Czech ambassador Jiri Schneider were also present.

IT almost looked as if the Supreme Court had transferred from Jerusalem to Ramat Gan as Supreme Court President Aharon Barak and his colleague on the bench, Justice Zvi Tal, rose to "hood" retired Supreme Court Justice Prof. Menachem Elon on the occasion of his receipt of an honorary doctorate from Bar-Ilan University. Also present at the on-campus ceremony was State Attorney Edna Arbel.

The keynote address was delivered by Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinfeld. Honorary doctorates were also awarded to Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky, Yale University Professor of Child Psychiatry, Pediatrics and Psychology, Dr. Donald J. Cohen, Torah scholar Rabbi Yosef Kapach and philanthropists Lorenz Cederbaum of Germany and Mira Koschitzky of Toronto.

AN INFORMAL reunion of members of Junior Hadassah will be held this coming Sunday, June 22, at the ground-breaking ceremony for the new sports complex at the Meir Shefya Youth village. The event, which will be held in the presence of Deborah Kaplan, former National President of Hadassah, will have special significance for Chana Levi (formerly Hilda Snyder) and Tzivia Rabiner (formerly Harriet Lieberman), who, as participants in the first Zionist Youth Leaders Year in Israel course held in 1947-48, spent part of the program in Meir Shefya.

IT APPEARS that US President Bill Clinton is not the only celebrity draft dodger. According to a Reuters report, Harrison Ford, in the July edition of *Movieland* magazine, admits to having avoided the draft during the Vietnam War by claiming to be a conscientious objector - a role which doesn't quite gel with his heroic movie image.

BRULIK



by DOSH

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

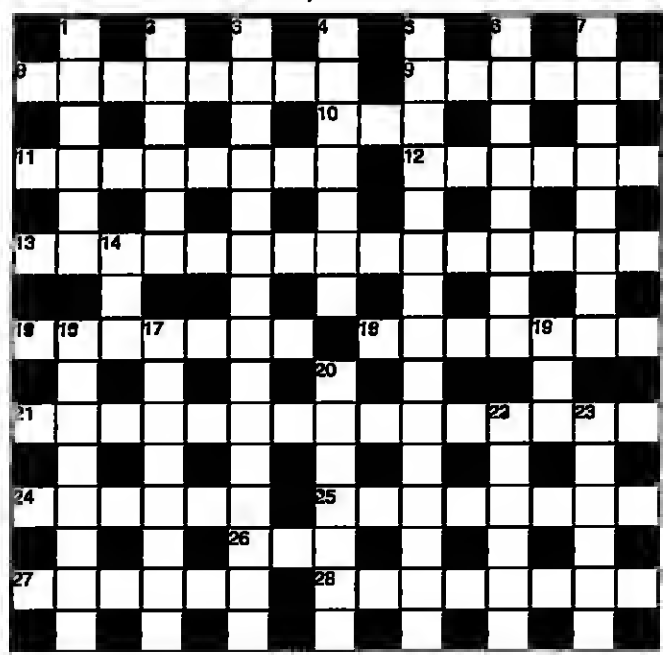
ACROSS

- 8 Wrecker is a brute, so vicious (6)
- 9 Instigator of rising is to abandon the North (6)
- 10 I shall shortly be sick (3)
- 11 Demand for attention gets angry response (4,4)
- 12 Presumably it's not even a curiosity (6)
- 13 To meet threat, he'd get prepared with such full defence? (5,2,3,5)
- 15 Women on move to tiny crescent (3,4)
- 18 To begin, the French are shy (7)
- 21 Showing natural poise, working men not abhorrent (2,3,6,4)
- 24 Female should have resisted strongly (6)

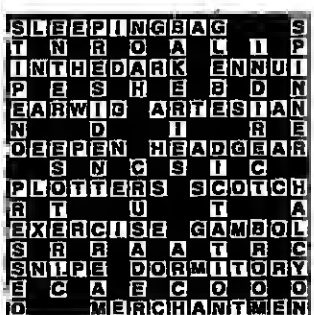
- 25 The main sign of a polluting spillage (3,5)
- 26 Starts to take extremely alcoholic drink (3)
- 27 One that's engaged is some ruffian, certainly (8)
- 28 Little creature dropping in the water to grab a pound (8)

DOWN

- 1 Party is hard work (6)
- 2 Volume that's better (6)
- 3 The pick of sitting Members of Parliament? (6,9)
- 4 Italian city street I wander round (7)
- 5 Everywhere in disarray (3,4,3,5)



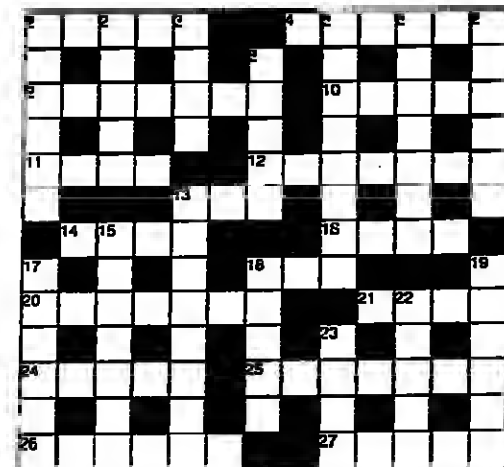
SOLUTIONS



Yesterday's Quick Solution
ACROSS: 1 Full, 3 Letterly, 9 Under, 10 Brigade, 11 Tie, 13 Terrified, 14 Poliah, 18 Elated, 19 Prejudice, 20 Cat, 22 Regaled, 23 Sober, 25 Shedding, 26 Eddy.
DOWN: 1 Fank, 2 Lid, 4 Auburn, 5 Trivial, 6 Realistic, 7 Yielded, 8 Fret, 18 Colleague, 14 Papyrus, 15 Squaled, 17 Hidden, 19 Easy, 21 Tardy, 24 Bid.

QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS



- 1 Brief (5)
- 4 Alteration (6)
- 9 Umpire (7)
- 10 Shunned person (5)
- 11 Acted in (4)
- 12 Style (7)
- 13 Trifle (3)
- 14 Perfumed flower (4)
- 16 Seaweed (4)
- 18 Container (3)
- 20 Large feline (7)
- 21 Celebrity (4)
- 24 Love affair (5)
- 25 Voting papers (7)
- 26 Dwell (6)
- 27 Good friends (5)

DOWN

- 1 Astute (6)
- 2 Present for sale (5)
- 3 Conservative (4)
- 5 Steersman (8)
- 6 Dozing (7)
- 7 Making mistakes (6)
- 8 Muscular (5)
- 13 Tattered (8)
- 15 Burdensome (7)
- 17 Cream cake (6)
- 18 Attractiveness (5)
- 19 Joints (6)
- 22 Card pack (5)
- 23 Article (4)

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HIGH TECH

in brief

By JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

Ephyx and Nippon Systemware sign \$1m. deal

Ephyx Technologies signed a \$1 million deal to provide Japanese software house Nippon Systemware with its V-Active technology for fully interactive video authoring. Concurrently, NSW made a \$1m. investment in the Israeli company. NSW will market Ephyx products both directly and via OEM agreements, under the NSW brand name.

The V-Active video authoring tool enables users to receive information while watching a video.

HP to expand local operations

In an effort to expand its global research effort, Hewlett-Packard recently announced that it plans to expand its local R&D facilities, as well as upgrade the status of its research operation at the Technion in Haifa. HP's Israel Science Center will be renamed HP Labs Israel.

IES signs \$1.3m. deal with Hayes

IES, which holds 62% of the cable modem manufacturer Combox, has signed a \$1.3m. deal with US company Hayes. This is Combox's first commercial order.

To date, the company has only sold modems to Israeli company New Media Communication, which is also a subsidiary of IES. The Hayes order will be filled later this year.

Memco releases new security product

Memco Software, a provider of information security software solutions, has introduced Proxima, a new security software product line. Proxima is designed to be more efficient and cheaper and help avoid careless mistakes that can threaten an enterprise's security.

With Proxima Manager, an administrator has a central point for managing hundreds or thousands of user IDs and passwords for both platforms and leading applications.

NMC, Comstream develop faster modem

New Media Communication and Comstream have developed a cable modem that works at a speed of 52 Mbps. Known as Cyber City, the modem is considered the fastest of its kind in the world.

The two companies also developed a version intended for satellite communication, called Cyber, which works at a speed of 48 Mbps.

A portion of the modem was developed in Israel by Comstream Israel, a wholly owned subsidiary of the San Diego company, which is a subsidiary of Rockwell Software Systems.

Orbit Semiconductor to reconsider Eilat plant

US company Orbit Semiconductor has decided to renew its request to the Ministry of Industry and Trade's Investment Center to set up an electronic component plant in Eilat.

Earlier this year, Orbit's management decided to cancel plans for the \$230m. facility after the Investment Center determined that the financial benefits the factory would yield did not justify the investment aid package Orbit requested.

Meridor slams PM, Frenkel

Says shekel-band decision caused serious economic damage

By DAVID HARRIS

By revealing to the media their dispute with the Treasury over the exchange-rate mechanism, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel caused serious economic damage, outgoing Finance Minister Dan Meridor said yesterday in his final appearance before the Knesset Finance committee.

The publication of the proposal to widen the so-called diagonal band led to an immediate demand for shekels, claimed Meridor.

Indeed, announcing on Wednesday a 1.2 percent interest-rate cut and the reduction of the lower slope limit from 6% to 4%, Frenkel said the measures had to be taken immediately because of the increased demand, following the media reports.

The Bank of Israel was not prepared yesterday to say how much foreign currency it had purchased this week, but Treasury estimates put the figure at well above \$700 million.

Speaking on Channel 1 yesterday, Frenkel said the decision to reduce interest rates was in no way political.

"It is forbidden for me in my domain to think what the political implications are of one decision or another," said Frenkel. "If I do, then I ask how much of an interest rate [cut] is it worth to keep this minister or to bring in another finance minister. That is not my playing field."

Later in the day Meridor quipped to the Knesset Finance Committee that he did not realize he was worth 1.2%.

Meridor gave MKs a broad overview of the economy during the government's first year in office and also warned his suc-



Outgoing Finance Minister Dan Meridor (left) and director-general Shmuel Slavin drink a toast at a meeting of senior Treasury staff members yesterday.

cessor of the difficulties that lie ahead, including settling the budget and the ongoing budgetary deficit, privatization, wage settlements and above all else the country's monetary policy.

"The Bank of Israel and its governor believe differently, which is their right, but with all due respect he is also the government's [economic] adviser and the responsibility is upon the government," said

Meridor. "It is not legitimate, in my eyes, in such a sensitive issue as the diagonal strip for him to come to me and say I want to widen it. When I say I am opposed, that should be the end of the matter."

"If the debate is carried out in public through journalists, and the leaks did come from two buildings not too far from each other [a reference to the Prime Minister's Office and Bank of Israel] to the

effect that the decision would be to widen the band, causing \$500m. to be sold in one day, this is not right on the part of a central bank at all."

Frenkel, meanwhile, explained yesterday the order of events during the discussion between himself, Meridor and Netanyahu, that led in part to Meridor's resignation.

Meridor and Frenkel were close to reaching a compromise and at

that point entered Netanyahu's room. The prime minister asked Frenkel if he could live with the existing exchange rate mechanism but accept the other agreed changes in the budgetary and liberalization spheres. Frenkel replied that, as the government's economic adviser, he firmly recommended the expansion of the diagonal band, but as the governor of the Bank of Israel he could only abide by and implement government policy.

"Prime minister, finance minister, if you decide not to change the exchange-rate band, I can live with that, but you must be aware of one thing: There will be a cost to continuing with the existing method," said the governor.

At that point, Frenkel and Meridor left Netanyahu's room thinking they had reached agreement that there would be no change in the mechanism.

Some three minutes later, Netanyahu called them both back in and asked Frenkel once again about the implications of the various options open to the government. Then he turned to Meridor and asked why he opposed a compromise solution. From that point on, according to Frenkel, the issue was opened once again, eventually leading to the cabinet debate and Meridor's resignation.

When asked if it was fair that Meridor did not know that the central bank's key lending rate was to be reduced 1.2% the following day, after his resignation, Frenkel replied that Meridor knew there would be an impending monetary announcement. However, Frenkel added, even he, as governor, did not know what the announcement would be until he had held discussions on Wednesday morning with senior central bank executives.

New shekel mechanism to increase arbitrage

By JENNIFER FRIEDLIN and DAVID HARRIS

The change in the Bank of Israel's exchange-rate band mechanism is likely to lead to an increase in arbitrage deals, Hebrew University professor of public finance Eitan Sheshinsky said yesterday.

Until now, the so-called diagonal

mechanism has allowed the shekel to appreciate or depreciate against the basket of currencies (US dollar, Japanese yen, German mark, British pound, and French franc) by 7 percent in either direction, before central bank intervention. The central diagonal line between the bands, set at zero, is a reflection of the difference between Israel's inflation target

and inflationary estimates among its major trading partners.

This week the Bank of Israel announced two key changes: while the slope of the upper band will remain at 6%, the lower band will rise at only 4%; this leads to second change - that the shekel will be able to freely float up to 15% in either direction. The 4% change to the slope is already in force, and the 15% limit will be reached in a year.

This moderation of the lower band's slope will lead to increased arbitrage possibilities, according

to Sheshinsky, meaning that traders will buy dollars abroad in order to sell them here and make shekel deposits, thus taking advantage of the Bank of Israel's still relatively high interest rates.

Money has been flowing into the country because of the high interest rate returns. If the lower slope remains at 4% and the gap increases between the diagonal and the lower band, there is an attraction for added capital inflow.

"I am therefore not sure that the 1.2% interest rate cut is suffi-

cient," said Sheshinsky. Furthermore, the current shekel exchange rate means Israeli exporters cannot successfully compete abroad, and with imports relatively inexpensive, it is likely that the balance of payments problem will remain.

"If the influx of capital continues, the bank will have to take further steps to stem it," added Sheshinsky, who pointed out an annual bank has purchased \$6.5 billion this year to keep the shekel above the lower limit of the diagonal bands.

IEC issues criteria for private Negev power station

By DAVID HARRIS

The first tender for the large-scale private generation of electricity is for a 370 megawatt recycling power station in the Negev, the Israel Electric Corporation announced yesterday.

The total investment is expected to reach \$300 million, according to the National Infrastructure Ministry.

Until now, only four private companies have been awarded generating contracts, which between them will only generate 65 megawatts.

The Negev plant is the first large step on the path to fulfilling the new Electricity Law, which requires that 10 percent of all electricity be produced by the private sector, as an initial step to opening the sector to competition.

The law grants IEC a 10-year license, and the company says it is determined to fulfill all its requirements so that it receives an extension beyond 2006.

The new station will adjoin IEC's existing plant at Ramat Hovav. It will take the heat from the gas by-product in two or three turbines and use it to create additional electricity. This means the station can produce up to 50 percent more power without using additional fuel.

The main fuel for the station will be natural gas, but fuel oil will be used as an alternative source.

The station will have to contain the latest technologies, but those which have a proven track record. The successful bidder will be asked to show its financial worth and be expected to cover at least 15 percent of the installation and construction costs from its own capital.

The new station will begin production in 2002, with a 20-year contract. The electricity will be sold to IEC or any other customer, dependent on the terms of the license.

The tender, which will be published internationally, has already received a great deal of interest,

according to the National Infrastructure Ministry.

Criteria for further power stations in the private sector will be drawn up by the ministry. A 1995 government decision calls for a total 900 megawatts to be produced in the private sector.

The first four firms to have been offered licenses will operate seven small plants. The companies, all domestic, are BNL International Trade Holdings, Gan Shmuel Energy (based in the kibbutz of the same name), Ofer Ltd., and Mega Dan Timna. They will run two generators in Kiryat Shmona, and one each at Gan Shmuel, the Lavi industrial area near the Golanai junction, Daliat al-Carmel, Kafri Maghar, and Timna.

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Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.625	0.750	1.000
Yen (10 million yen)	-	-	-

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (19.6.97)					
Currency basket	CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep. Rates**
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	3.6770	3.7384	-	-	3.7133
German mark	3.2845	3.4391	3.32	3.49	3.4190
French franc	1.9584	1.9880	1.82	2.02	1.9753
Japanese yen (100)	5.5570	5.6487	5.48	5.73	5.6130
Dutch florin	0.5800	0.5884	0.57	0.60	0.5854
Swiss franc	2.9917	3.0400	2.94	3.09	3.0182
Norwegian krone	1.7388	1.7867	1.70	1.80	1.7553
Denmark krone	2.3426	2.3804	2.30	2.42	2.3646
Finland mark	0.4395	0.4458	0.43	0.48	0.4422
Canadian dollar	0.4874	0.4750	0.45	0.49	0.4717
Australian dollar	0.5141	0.5224	0.50	0.53	0.5187
S. African rand	0.8541	0.8647	0.84	0.88	0.8599
Belgian franc (10)	2.4311	2.4704	2.38	2.51	2.4554
Austrian schilling (10)	2.5328	2.5737	2.48	2.61	2.5800
Italian lira (1000)	0.7498	0.7617	0.68	0.77	0.7572
Jordanian dinar	0.9485	0.9838	0.93	0.98	0.9672
Egyptian pound	1.8984	2.0007	1.96	2.06	2.0183
ECU	4.7736	4.8506	4.71	5.03	4.8721
Irish punt	0.9800	1.0500	0.96	1.05	1.0770
Spanish peseta (100)	3.8278	3.8896	-	-	3.8658
	5.1079	5.1903	5.02	5.27	5.1555
	2.3200	2.3575	2.28	2.40	2.3410

*These rates vary according to bank. **Bank of Israel.
SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

ISRAELI SHARES IN NEW YORK

Symbol	Last	Change
Amex	1173.00	+0.2
Amex 100	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 200	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 300	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 400	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 500	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 600	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 700	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 800	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 900	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 1000	2195.70	+1.1

AMEX

Symbol	Last	Change
Amex	1173.00	+0.2
Amex 100	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 200	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 300	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 400	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 500	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 600	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 700	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 800	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 900	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 1000	2195.70	+1.1

NASDAQ

Symbol	Last	Change
Amex	1173.00	+0.2
Amex 100	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 200	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 300	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 400	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 500	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 600	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 700	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 800	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 900	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 1000	2195.70	+1.1

MISHTANIM

Symbol	Last	Change
Amex	1173.00	+0.2
Amex 100	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 200	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 300	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 400	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 500	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 600	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 700	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 800	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 900	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 1000	2195.70	+1.1

AMEX

Symbol	Last	Change
Amex	1173.00	+0.2
Amex 100	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 200	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 300	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 400	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 500	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 600	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 700	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 800	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 900	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 1000	2195.70	+1.1

NEW YORK MARKET INDEXES

Index	Last	Change
DJ Industrial	7777.00	+0.35
DJ Transport	2732.70	-0.50
DJ Utility	225.80	-0.20
S&P 500	2195.70	+1.10
NASDAQ	2195.70	+1.10
Amex	1173.00	+0.20
Amex 100	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 200	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 300	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 400	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 500	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 600	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 700	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 800	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 900	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 1000	2195.70	+1.10

OTHER MARKET INDEXES

Index	Last	Change
FTSE 100	4533.30	+0.30
Nikkei 225	12500.00	+0.50
DAX	3800.00	+0.20
Hong Kong	14564.00	+0.25
Singapore	2250.00	+0.10
London	2195.70	+1.10
Amex	1173.00	+0.20
Amex 100	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 200	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 300	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 400	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 500	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 600	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 700	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 800	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 900	2195.70	+1.10
Amex 1000	2195.70	+1.10

DOLLAR CROSS-RATES (US)

Country	Rate	Change
Japan	146.10	+0.01
Germany	1.46	+0.01
France	6.55	+0.01
Italy	1.36	+0.01
UK	0.63	+0.01
Canada	0.71	+0.01
Australia	0.75	+0.01
South Africa	0.50	+0.01
India	0.01	+0.01
China	0.01	+0.01
South Korea	0.01	+0.01
Indonesia	0.01	+0.01
Malaysia	0.01	+0.01
Thailand	0.01	+0.01
Philippines	0.01	+0.01
Singapore	0.01	+0.01
Hong Kong	0.01	+0.01
Taiwan	0.01	+0.01
Israel	0.01	+0.01

SPOT MARKET METALS (US)

Commodity	Price	Change
Gold	384.10	+0.01
Silver	4.75	+0.01
Copper	1.00	+0.01
Aluminum	0.50	+0.01
Zinc	0.80	+0.01
Nickel	1.20	+0.01
Lead	0.40	+0.01
Iron Ore	10.00	+0.01
Uranium	20.00	+0.01
Platinum	50.00	+0.01
Palladium	100.00	+0.01
High-purity copper	1.20	+0.01

NEW YORK METAL FUTURES

Commodity	Price	Change
Gold	384.10	+0.01
Silver	4.75	+0.01
Copper	1.00	+0.01
Aluminum	0.50	+0.01
Zinc	0.80	+0.01
Nickel	1.20	+0.01
Lead	0.40	+0.01
Iron Ore	10.00	+0.01
Uranium	20.00	+0.01
Platinum	50.00	+0.01
Palladium	100.00	+0.01
High-purity copper	1.20	+0.01

LONDON METAL FIXES

Commodity	Price	Change
Gold	384.10	+0.01
Silver	4.75	+0.01
Copper	1.00	+0.01
Aluminum	0.50	+0.01
Zinc	0.80	+0.01
Nickel	1.20	+0.01
Lead	0.40	+0.01
Iron Ore	10.00	+0.01
Uranium	20.00	+0.01
Platinum	50.00	+0.01
Palladium	100.00	+0.01
High-purity copper	1.20	+0.01

PARIS

Commodity	Price	Change
Gold	384.10	+0.01
Silver	4.75	+0.01
Copper	1.00	+0.01
Aluminum	0.50	+0.01
Zinc	0.80	+0.01
Nickel	1.20	+0.01
Lead	0.40	+0.01
Iron Ore	10.00	+0.01
Uranium	20.00	+0.01
Platinum	50.00	+0.01
Palladium	100.00	+0.01
High-purity copper	1.20	+0.01

FRANKFURT

Commodity	Price	Change
Gold	384.10	+0.01
Silver	4.75	+0.01
Copper	1.00	+0.01
Aluminum	0.50	+0.01
Zinc	0.80	+0.01
Nickel	1.20	+0.01
Lead	0.40	+0.01
Iron Ore	10.00	+0.01
Uranium	20.00	+0.01
Platinum	50.00	+0.01
Palladium	100.00	+0.01
High-purity copper	1.20	+0.01

INTERNATIONAL SHARES

Symbol	Last	Change
Amex	1173.00	+0.2
Amex 100	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 200	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 300	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 400	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 500	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 600	2195.70	+1.1
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Amex 800	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 900	2195.70	+1.1
Amex 1000	2195.70	+1.1

INTERNATIONAL SHARES

Symbol	Last	Change
Amex	1173.00	+0.2
Amex 100	2195.70	+1.1

ction ut Maof -0.09% NIS 208 million worth traded. That's 11 percent of the month's daily average...

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DEADLINES offices: Jerusalem - weekdays: 12 noon the day before publication; for Friday 4 p.m. on Thursday. Tel Aviv and Haifa - weekdays: 12 noon, 2 days before publication; for Friday and Sunday 4 p.m., Thursday in Tel Aviv and 12 noon Thursday in Haifa.

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WHERE TO STAY JERUSALEM LODGES LTD. Short and long term rentals. Bed and breakfast. P.O. Box 4233, Jerusalem 91044. Tel. 02-5811745, Fax: 02-561-8541.

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REHAVIAI 3, LUXURIOUS, ground floor, furnished, private heating, \$1000. Tel. 02-683-4116. REHAVIA, 4.5, 2ND floor, furnished, spacious, view, from September, long-term possible. Tel. 02-678-8776 (NS).

DWELLINGS Jerusalem Area SALES/RENTALS 2 BEDROOM APARTMENT, sunny, modernized, French Hill. Tel. Serah U.S.A. 847-724-7722. 2.5 CENTER, 3 possible or (scuzzi), 6 beds, rent, elevator. Tel. 02-625-2971 (NS).

REHAVIA, RACHBAH ST., 2 rooms, quiet, view, nice balcony. Exclusive to AMBASSADOR. Tel. 02-561-8101. SAN SIMON (NEAR plant nursery), 3.5 with garden, renovated, air conditioning, \$160,000. SHIRAN EXCLUSIVE through ANGLO-SAXON. Tel. 02-625-1161.

HAR NOF, 4 ON Kaban, view, sunny, parent's suite, priced to sell. KATHY ROSENBERG BROKERS. Tel. 02-651-9616 (NS). HEART OF OLD TOLPIOT, new apartments. Immediate occupancy. 2 - 4 rooms. ALEX LOSKY Tel. 02-623-5595, 02-672-5889.

SEA VIEW! FULLY furnished and renovated apartments and studios. Short/long term rentals. Tel. 03-546-6920. RENTALS BAT YAM, BEAUTIFUL LARGE flat, furnished, by the sea + parking + fr. Tel. 03-751-2951.

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TALBIEH, (HOVEVEI ZION St.), 2.5, + balcony, 3rd floor, \$750. Heat, un-furnished, gorgeous. Tel. 02-566-5631. TALBIEH, 2 + dining area, 1st floor. Price, Tel. 02-581-7511, 10:00 - 13:00 - 02-628-9958 evenings.

REHAVIA, 5, NICELY furnished, comfortable, short/long term. PEARL SKOLNIK REALTY. Tel. 02-586-5552. BABBIAT APARTMENTS AVAILABLE: Old Talpiot, 5 rooms, fully furnished, August for year. ALEX LOSKY RE. Tel. 02-623-5595.

REHAVIA (NEAR HECHAL - SHLOMO), 4.5 (130 sq.m.), view, large terrace, south exposure, \$335,000. SHIRAN EXCLUSIVE through ANGLO-SAXON. Tel. 02-625-1161. BARGAIN HAR NOF, large apartment, 5.5, 2nd floor, spacious, well kept, 3 exposures, \$325,000. Tel. 02-652-5346.

REHAVIA, 4, LUXURY + balcony + large storage. Private underground parking. Tel. 02-771-3492. TALBIEH, (NEAR LAROMME HOTEL), excellent value, 4 spacious, 1st floor, elevator, storage room, balcony, parking. Asking \$480,000. Exclusive to ALEX LOSKY REAL ESTATE, 19 King David St. Tel. 02-623-5595, fax 02-623-2419.

HEAVENLY, 4, 3RD floor, view, good directions, light, flexible price. Tel. 02-678-5588, 050-566943. ITALIAN COLONY, 2 bedrooms, 2nd floor, underground parking, elevator. Tel. 02-652-1535, 052-635-697.

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JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH - The Baptist House Center, 84 Merkis Street, Sunday, 11 a.m. Tel. 02-6265942. HAIFA-CHRISTIAN BEIT ELIAHU (EVANGELICAL, Messianic Congregation) Heila, 43 Meir Street, Tel. 04-8523581.

JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH - The Baptist House Center, 84 Merkis Street, Sunday, 11 a.m. Tel. 02-6265942. PENTECOSTAL WORSHIP SERVICE, Mt. Zion Fellowship, Fri., Sat., 7:30 p.m., Sun. 10:30 a.m., 7:30 p.m. Tel. 02-582-8964.

MORSHET YISRAEL - Conservative A. Aron, Dr. Avraham Feder, P.O. Box, Service: Minha 6:30 p.m. Shafran 6:30 a.m., Minha 6:30 p.m. Daily Minyan 7:00 a.m. TEL AVIV-CHRISTIAN Immanuel Church (Lutheran), Tel Aviv-Yafo, 15 Bear Hofman (near 17 Elat Street), Tel. 03-6820654 Saturday service 11 a.m. Service in English every Sunday at 11 a.m.

WHERE TO GO Notices in this feature, are charged at NIS 35.10 per line, including VAT. Insertion every day of the month costs NIS 585.00 per line, including VAT per month.

WHERE TO GO HAIFA HEBREW UNIVERSITY, Tours of the Mount Scopus campus in English, daily Sun-Thur, 11 a.m. from Britonim Reception Center, Sherman Administration Bldg. Buses: 4, 8, 23, 26, 28. For info, call 8382619.

WHERE TO GO HAIFA WHAT'S ON IN HAIFA, dial 04-8374253.

WHERE TO GO JERUSALEM CONDUCTED TOURS Tourists and Visitors, come and see the General Israel Orphan's Home for Girls, Jerusalem's 19th century activities, and impressively modern buildings. Free Guided tours weekdays, 9-12 Bus no. 14, 24, Kiryat Moshe, 8523291.

ARTGUIDE Notices in this feature, are charged at NIS 35.10 per line, including VAT. Insertion every day of the month costs NIS 111.15 per line, including VAT per month.

ART GUIDE HAIFA THE REUBEN AND EOTH NECHT MUSEUM, (Haifa University), Permanent exhibition: The People of Israel in Eretz Yisrael + Phoenicians on the Northern Coast of Israel in the Biblical Period - Illness and Healing in Ancient Times - Impressions and the Jewish School at Paris. Open Sun., Mon., Wed., Thur., 10-4; Tue., 10-7; Fri., 10-1. Sat. 10-2 ADMISSION FREE.

ART GUIDE JERUSALEM MUSEUMS OLD YISHUV COURT MUSEUM, Life in the Jewish community in the Old City, mid-19th century - World War II. 6 Or Hashaim, Jewish Quarter, Old City, Sun.-Thur. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

ART GUIDE TEL AVIV TEL AVIV MUSEUM OF ART, Soviet Photography from the Museum Collection 'Andreas Senarac: The Mopque, Zvi Heder, Sankovsk, Lucian Freud: Works from the early 1940s through the mid-1990s - Portraits - by a group of Israeli artists. Ratanan Levy: Drawings/Virtual Reality - the domestic and realistic in contemporary Israeli art. MELEN RUBINSTEIN PAVILION FOR CONTEMPORARY ART, Shlomo Ben-David and Amnon Ben-David, The Inverted Campaign, Hours: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Tue., 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. Fri., 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Sat., 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Meyerhoff Art Education Center, Tel. 6919155-8.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE

GENERAL ASSISTANCE EMERGENCY PHARMACIES Friday, June 20 Jerusalem: Kupat Holim Clalit, Straus A, 3 Avigdor, 670-6660; Shualat, Shualat Road, 581-0108; Dar Aldawa, Horof's Gate, 628-2058. Tel Aviv: Arlosoroff, 76 Arlosoroff, 523-0746; Brit, 28 King George, 528-3731. Ra'anana-Kfar Sava: Doron, 8 Geula, Ra'anana, 771-6084. Netanya: Hanassi, 36 Weizmann, 882-3838. Haifa: Balfour, 1 Massada, 862-2289. Krayot area: Krayot, 1 Hahagana, Kiryat Blatik, 872-1665. Herzliya: Clal Pharm, Beit Merkazim, 6 Maskit (crr. Sderot Hegalim), Herzliya Plush, 955-9472, 955-8407. Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Upper Nazareth: Clal Pharm, Lev Har's Mail, 657-0468. Open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, June 21 Jerusalem: (day) Super Pharm, Gilo Commercial Center, 676-1673; (evening) Kupat Holim Clalit, Straus A, 3 Avigdor, 670-6660; (day and evening) Balsam, Salah e-Din, 627-2315; Shualat, Shualat Road, 581-0108; Dar Aldawa, Horof's Gate, 628-2058. Tel Aviv: Habimah, 17 Ozenoff, 528-8465; Bloch, 32 Bloch, 522-6426. Till midnight: Superpharm Ramat Aviv, 40 Einstein, Ramat Aviv, 641-3730; Superpharm London Ministore, 4 Shaul Hamelech, 696-0115. Ra'anana-Kfar Sava: (day) Magdial, 54 Derech Magdial, Hod Hasharon, 741-5887; (evening) Haragi, 47 Rothschild, Kfar Sava, 767-0908. Netanya: Geva, 14 Sha'ar Hagai, 882-2895. Haifa: Kiryat Eliezer, 6 Meyerhoff Sq., 851-1707. Krayot area: Superpharm, Haldiron, 44 Hapalmah, Kiryat Blatik, 877-9320. Herzliya: Clal Pharm, Beit Merkazim, 6 Maskit (crr. Sderot Hegalim), Herzliya

Plush, 955-8472, 955-8407. Open 10 a.m. to midnight. Upper Nazareth: Clal Pharm, Lev Har's Mail, 657-0468. Open 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. DUTY HOSPITALS Friday, June 20 Jerusalem: Shaare Zedek (internal, pediatrics); Hadasah Ein Karem (surgery, orthopedics, obstetrics, ophthalmology, ENT). Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv Medical Center Dana Pediatric Hospital (pediatrics); Tel Aviv Medical Center (internal, surgery). Netanya: Laniado. Saturday, June 21 Jerusalem: Hadasah Ein Karem (internal, surgery, orthopedics, ENT); Shur Holim (obstetrics, pediatrics); Shaare Zedek (ophthalmology). Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv Medical Center Dana Pediatric Hospital (pediatrics); Tel Aviv Medical Center (internal, surgery). Netanya: Laniado. POLICE 100 FIRE 102 In emergencies dial 102. Otherwise, dial number of your local station as given in the front of the phone directory. FIRST AID 101 Magen David Adom In emergencies dial 101 (Hebrew) or 911 (English) in most parts of the country. In addition: Ashdod 8651333 Kfar Sava 9602222 Ashdod 8551832 Nahariya 9912333 BeerSheva 8274767 Netanya 9804444 Beit Shimon 8523133 P. Tikva 9311111 Dan Region 5793333 Rehovot 9451333 Eilat 8332444 Raion 9642883

Halla 8512233 Sefed 8903033 Jerusalem 6529133 Tel Aviv 6480111 Kamel 9895444 Tiberies 8792444 * Mobile Intensive Care Unit (MICU) service in the area, around the clock. Medical help for tourists (in English) 177-022-9110. The National Poison Control Center at Rambam Hospital, phone 04-852-9205 for emergency calls 24 hours a day, for information in case of poisoning. Eran - Emotionel First Aid - 1201, also Jerusalem 561-0303, Tel Aviv 546-1111 (children/youth 546-0739), Fishon Lezion 958-9961/2, Haifa 867-2222, BeerSheva 648-4333, Kfar Sava 767-4555, Hadera 834-6789. Rape Crisis Center (24 hours), Tel Aviv 523-4819, 544-9191 (men), Jerusalem 988-9770, Kfar Sava 853-6333, Eilat 853-1977. Crisis Center for Religious Women 02-655-5746/5, 24-hour service, confidentially guaranteed. Emergency line for women in distress Sunday-Thursdays 24 hrs. a day; Friday 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. 02-650-5720. Wizo hotlines for battered women 02-651-4111, 03-546-1133 (also in Russian), 07-637-6310, 08-855-0508 (also in Amharic). Kupat Nolim Information Center 177-022-1908, Sunday-Thursdays, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Hadasah/Jerusalem Municipal Health Center for Adolescents: 6 Chilo St., Kiryat Hayovel, Jlm. Advice by phone 02-643-8882. Hadasah Medical Organization - Israel Cancer Association telephone support service 02-624-7676.

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US asks to see Peled over Arafat link to WTC bombing

By STEVE RODAN

The Clinton administration has asked the government for permission to meet with Deputy Education Minister Moshe Peled to discuss his assertion in March that Yasser Arafat was privy to the 1993 attempt to blow up New York's World Trade Center, in which six people were killed.

Sources said the US request, which PEUGEOT 1991 309SX, 45,000 km., air conditioning, excellent condition. NIS 29,000. Tel. 050-241-492.

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came from Attorney-General Janet Reno to her counterpart Elyakim Rubinstein, asked for an urgent meeting between an American government representative and Peled. The sources said the administration has come under pressure from the US Congress to investigate Peled's assertion.

"There is a lot of pressure in Congress to use this information as the smoking gun to stop all US aid to the Palestinian Authority," a diplomatic source said.

The source said Rubinstein approved the US request to question Peled after the deputy minister agreed as well. Under Israeli law, the attorney-general has to approve the investigation of any national by a foreign power.

Rubinstein, through Justice Ministry spokesman Ety Eshed, confirmed that he met with Peled concerning the US request.

"In accordance with a request from the international department of the US Attorney-General's Office, the [Rubinstein] turned to Peled," Eshed said. She did not elaborate.

A source in the Prime Minister's Office said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has not been involved in the contacts between Israel and the US regarding Peled. The source said the forthcoming meeting should not be construed as an attempt by the Netanyahu government to damage Arafat or try to stop US aid to the PA.

A source said that US investigators will also be meeting with intelligence sources and a media source who lived in the Arab world. In March, Peled told the Post

that Israeli intelligence has evidence that Arafat arrived in Khartoum several days before the World Trade Center bombing and attended the discussions of the plot held by Sudanese leaders and Islamic terrorist operatives.

Peled's assertion sparked calls in US Congress for an investigation into Arafat's role in the conspiracy. On April 1, Sen. Arlen Specter, former chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, sent a letter to Reno asking for an investigation.

"It appears to me, that if true, Arafat would be prosecutable under US criminal laws," Specter wrote. "I would appreciate your advice as to what indictments could be brought as to Chairman Arafat."

On April 29, Assistant Attorney-General Andrew Foils responded that the Justice Department is unaware of Arafat's involvement in the conspiracy, adding that Israeli authorities deny the accuracy of the statements attributed to Peled. The deputy minister, following his interview with the Post, reiterated his assertion to several Israeli radio stations.

Specter countered that the attorney-general's response was insufficient and called in Congress for a genuine investigation into Peled's remarks.

Sources said Peled has consistently referred government officials to Israeli intelligence agencies.

Asked last night whether he will meet with a US official to discuss Arafat's role in the bombing, the deputy minister said, "I am not going to comment. This is not something I want to discuss or even confirm."

Knesset to get list of MKs to be questioned in Ben-Ari case

By RAINE MARCUS

National Investigations chief Cmdr. Sando Mazor will meet with Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon on Sunday to provide him with a list of public figures - cabinet ministers and Knesset members - whom police wish to summon to give evidence in the Zvi Beo-Ari (also known as

Gregory Lerner) case, and to discuss procedures.

The list is expected to contain more than 10 politicians, from the Likud, Labor, and Yisrael Ba'aliya parties, who police believe can shed light on Ben-Ari's activities and alleged financial crimes here.

Mazor emphasized that, at this stage, none of those summoned

will be questioned under caution, but will simply be asked to give evidence.

Police are concentrating on financial crimes allegedly committed by Ben-Ari here, namely tax fraud, violating banking laws, and his connection to an \$85 million scam allegedly carried out in Russia. Politicians, including ministers, are expected to be summoned starting next week to the National Crimes Squad's Petah Tikva headquarters.

The first to give evidence was former Labor Party secretary-general Nissim Zvili, who met with Ben-Ari three times after the latter offered him and the party free air time on Russian television for Labor propaganda campaigns. Zvili refused. Since then, because of the sensitivity of the case, police have postponed summoning other public figures.

Regarding suspicions that Ben-Ari was responsible for the murder of a banker in Russia and the plot to kill another, police here have frozen the investigation for lack of cooperation from their Russian counterparts and since the crimes were committed abroad.

Police now have to persuade Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein to authorize the further remand of Ben-Ari this Sunday, who he is due to appear in Petah Tikva Magistrate's Court. Rubinstein already authorized a further remand after Ben-Ari had been in custody for 30 days, as is required by law.

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\$18 In honor of my niece, Stacy and nephews, Joel and Scott - Rob Piskin, Akron, OH.
CS15 In honor of Binyamin Netanyahu - R. Asper, Winnipeg.

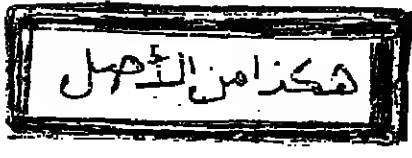
New Progress

Donations	Totals
NIS 283	NIS 48,451
\$1,004	\$15,079.40

(other currencies converted into shekels)

Leonard admitted from Lions' side

Editors: Joseph



Rain delays Atherton's captaincy record

LONDON (AP) - Persistent rain forced Michael Atherton to wait one more day before becoming England's longest-serving Test captain.

The first day's play in the Second Ashes Test was called off without a ball bowled yesterday when umpires David Shepherd and Srinivas Venkataraghavan made their third and final inspection before announcing the inevitable decision.

Ural Australian captain Mark Taylor and Atherton start the match officially with the toss, the England skipper will remain level with Peter May's record of 41 Tests at the helm.

The first day of the Lord's Test is always a sell-out, but by the late afternoon fans began leaving the ground.

The only entertainment for the die-hard supporters was on the giant Lord's television screen which showed highlights

of classic Ashes encounters, including England's emphatic nine-wicket First-Test win at Edgbaston two weeks ago.

According to chief executive Tim Lamb, the England and Wales Cricket Board will refund £600,000 to the disappointed fans.

The first four days of the much-awaited Test are sold out, attracting a revenue of £2.65 million, making it the most subscribed Test match in the history of the Marylebone Cricket Club.

There was some hope of play in the early afternoon when dark clouds made way for bright sunshine and the huge covers protecting the hallowed Lord's turf were pulled off.

"We were hopeful two hours ago, but when we came out to inspect it was very dark and rain was in the air, conditions

not conducive to starting a Test match," said Shepherd.

It is the first time a full day's play has been lost at Lord's since the Sunday's play was lost in 1991 against the West Indies. The last time play was lost for an entire day in a Test between Australia and England at Lord's was in 1964.

It leaves just four days of play, but that was all England needed at Edgbaston to take its 1-0 lead in the six-match series.

Australia has won its last three Tests here while England haven't won at Lord's since 1934.

Lord's has hosted 30 Ashes Tests, with Australia winning 12 and England just five - four of them last century.

The weather forecast for the next three days is much the same as it was for yesterday - rain.

Security stepped up at Wimbledon

LONDON (Reuters) - Security at this year's Grand Slam Tennis tournament at Wimbledon is being stepped up, the All-England Club confirmed yesterday, with officials and police eager to avoid a repeat of April's Grand National chaos.

"Security has been increased and the Grand National was taken into account. We liaise very closely with police on these matters," an All-England spokesman said.

A bomb scare halted April's Grand National steeplechase. The race was postponed for two days.

The spokesman confirmed that two car parks would be moved to create a "sterile" area of around 200 meters along one of the main roads, but he stressed that the changes would not hugely inconvenience spectators.

"We're not sending spectators off to the middle of nowhere," he said, estimating that people using the car parks, previously situated on the golf course, would have to walk a further 400 meters.

Visitors using public transport or other car parks would not be affected.

All bags will be searched when spectators enter the grounds and all vehicles will be checked as part of the increased security measures. In addition, closed circuit television cameras with recording equipment will scan the course.

"The safety of all our visitors... is of paramount importance," Christopher Gorrington, chief executive of the club said in a statement.

The championships, which start on Monday, are expected to attract around 400,000 visitors over the two weeks.

Reiner Chait adds:

Rain yesterday postponed several qualifying matches including two Israelis. Oren Montvassel was scheduled to play 1987 Wimbledon winner Pat Cash, and Eyal Ehrlich was slated to go up against Jan Hedrick Davids from the Netherlands.

Three Israelis have already been sent packing. Eyal Ran, Raviv Weidenfeld and Noam Behr all lost in their qualifying matches.

Leonard omitted from Lions' side

CAPE TOWN (Reuters) - Prop Jason Leonard was a surprise omission from the British Lions side named yesterday to face South Africa in the opening Test of the three-match series in Cape Town.

Leonard will be on the bench for tomorrow's match at Newlands with Ireland's tighthead prop Paul Wallace and Scotland loosehead Tom Smith partnering Irish booker Keith Wood in the Test front row.

Lions manager Fran Cotton faced difficult choices with so many players in good form. The only member of the 35-man squad not considered for selection was Irish number eight Eric Miller who has the flu.

"It's more than just a bug - he is still in bed now and is likely to be for a couple more days," Cotton said.

Six Englishmen have been selected for tomorrow's starting line-up, while four players - tour very close for selection by England's John Bendley, will play on the left wing while Welshman Scott Gibbs is set to resume his successful Lions partnership with the creative Jeremy Guscott in the center.

British Lions: Neil Jenkins; Iwan Evans, Jeremy Guscott, Scott Gibbs, Allan Tait, Gregor Townsend, Matt Dawson; Tim Rodder, Richard Hill, Lawrence Dallaglio, Jeremy Davidson, Paul Martin Johnson (captain), Paul Wallace, Keith Wood, Tom Smith. Substitutes: John Bendley, Mike Catt, Austin Healey, Rob Wainwright, Jason Leonard, Barry Williams



SWIPE - Tigers' Brian Hunter steals second as Marlins' Luis Castillo takes late throw. Detroit won 6-2.

Yankees triumph in 'Subway Series'

NEW YORK (AP) - The Yankees won New York's first Subway Series in 40 years, beating the Mets 3-2 in the decisive third game Wednesday on a 10th-inning RBI single by Tino Martinez.

For six innings, it appeared the cheering, chanting sellout crowd of 56,278 at Yankee Stadium was witnessing one of the most memorable afternoons in the history of New York baseball.

The Yankees' David Cone dominated his former team, and didn't allow a hit until John Olerud's leadoff double in the seventh.

But the Mets came back from a 2-0 deficit with single runs in the seventh and eighth, tying the game when Cone balked with pinch-runner Steve Bieser on third.

Solo batters by Chad Curtis and Cecil Fielder off Rick Reed had given the Yankees their lead.

Mike Stanton (3-0) followed Cone and completed the three-bitter for the Yankees.

Expos 1, Orioles 0

Carlos Perez pitched an eight-inning and Sherman Obando broke up Jimmy Key's perfect game with a sixth-inning homer as visiting Montreal won for the 11th time in 12 games.

Key (11-2) retired the first 16 batters before Obando, a former Oriole who entered the game hitting .086, hit a 2-2 pitch into the left-field seats beyond the outstretched glove of a leaping B.J. Surhoff.

That was enough offense for Perez (8-4), who recorded his third shutout in his last four starts. The left-hander has allowed just two earned runs this month in 3 1/2 innings.

Tigers 6, Marlins 2

Omar Olivares pitched a four-inning and Joe Hall, making his first major league start in nearly two years, drove in three runs as host Detroit became the last team with an interleague victory.

Detroit had lost five straight to NL teams, its longest losing streak of the season.

Florida starter Al Leiter (5-5) gave up seven hits and six runs in three innings.

Bobby Bonilla bit a two-run

homer for Florida.

Dodgers 7, Angels 5

Billy Ashley, Raul Mondesi and Todd Zeile each hit two-run homers to lead Los Angeles to a two-game home sweep.

The two teams met again in interleague play July 2-3 at Anaheim Stadium.

The game marked the first major league matchup of pitchers from Japan, with Anaheim reliever Shigetoshi Hasegawa coming on in the sixth inning while Dodger starter Hideo Nomo was still in the game. Neither, however, figured in the decision.

Rockies 10, Rangers 9

John Wetland gave up a three-run homer to Andres Galaraga and a bases-loaded walk to Walt Weiss in the bottom of the ninth inning, handing Colorado a home win.

Wetland, who allowed the Rockies to score three runs in the ninth inning on Tuesday night, came in to protect a 9-6 lead.

Giants 4, Mariners 2

Mark Gardner allowed three hits in 7 1/2 innings, and Stan Javier hit his third interleague homer as San Francisco completed a two-game home sweep.

Gardner (8-2), who retired the first 13 batters before allowing Jay Buhner's 17th homer in the fifth, struck out four and walked two. The second hit he allowed was Russ Davis' 10th homer leading off the eighth.

Javier hit a solo homer in the sixth as the Giants won their fourth straight. He added a sacrifice fly in the eighth.

Javier has three homers this season, all since interleague play began last Thursday. Javier, who spent eight seasons in the AL, hit a two-run pinch-hit homer in the Giants' 4-3 win over Seattle on Tuesday night.

Reds 5, Indians 2

In Cleveland, they may not have the best record in Ohio, but the Cincinnati Reds are state champs. Journeyman Mike Remlinger shut out Cleveland on two hits through six innings and gave bragging rights to the Reds, who won the finale of the first regular-season all-Ohio series.

The historic three-game series

drew 128,727 - three straight sell-outs at Jacobs Field, extending the park's sellout streak to 163 games.

The Reds took two of three from Cleveland, leaving both teams 3-3 in interleague play.

Blue Jays 5, Braves 3

Carlos Delgado hit a three-run homer through the fog and as host Toronto avoided a three-game sweep.

There was a 14-minute fog delay in the fourth inning. The game was interrupted while the retractable roof at SkyDome was closing.

John Smoltz (6-6), who won at Toronto in Game 5 of the 1992 World Series, was tagged for five runs in seven innings. The 1996 NL Cy Young winner gave up six hits and struck out seven.

White Sox 3, Cubs 0

Thanks to Wilson Alvarez, the White Sox rule the Windy City. Alvarez pitched a four-bitter for his first shutout in more than three years as the White Sox defeated the Cubs to win the first regular-season crosstown series in Chicago history.

The Cubs won the opener but the White Sox rebounded to take the next two as the teams met in games other than exhibitions for the first time since the 1906 World Series.

Wednesday's game drew 44,204 fans, the second consecutive sell-out crowd and second-largest in new Comiskey Park history to Tuesday's 44,249.

Brewers 3, Cardinals 4

Jeremy Burnitz hit a bases-loaded triple and host Milwaukee won a three-game sweep.

The loss left St. Louis with a 1-5 record in interleague play.

Red Sox 4, Phillies 2

Shane Mack, reviving a once stagnant season, hit a tiebreaking, two-run single in the seventh inning that led Boston to a home win.

It was Boston's fifth victory in six games against NL opponents. Philadelphia dropped to 1-5 after the first round of interleague games.

The three-game series drew 80,019, close to Boston's average at Fenway Park.

Athletics 11, Padres 9

Jose Canseco and Mark

McGwire put on a show with tape-measure home runs, but it was rookie Jason McDonald's first big league homer that gave Oakland a two-game road sweep.

The win gave AL teams a 48-36 edge over NL clubs in this first round of interleague play. The AL-NL competition resumes June 30.

McDonald's two-run homer off Padre's relief ace Trevor Hoffman came with two outs in the eighth and put the Athletics ahead 10-8.

Canseco hit consecutive homers measuring 399 and 439 feet, and McGwire hit one 434 feet, his 26th of the season. All three came off rookie Will Cunnane.

American League

Team	W	L	Pct.	GB
Baltimore	46	21	.685	-
New York	39	30	.565	8
Toronto	32	34	.485	13 1/2
Boston	31	38	.448	16
Detroit	30	37	.448	16
National Division				
Cleveland	35	31	.530	-
Kansas City	33	34	.493	2 1/2
Milwaukee	33	34	.493	2 1/2
Chicago	32	36	.471	4
Minnesota	32	37	.464	4 1/2
West Division				
Seattle	38	31	.551	-
Texas	36	31	.537	1
Anaheim	34	34	.500	3 1/2
Oakland	30	41	.423	9

National League

Team	W	L	Pct.	GB
Atlanta	44	26	.629	-
Florida	41	28	.594	2 1/2
Montreal	40	29	.580	3 1/2
New York	37	32	.538	6 1/2
Philadelphia	22	46	.324	21
Central Division				
Houston	34	37	.479	-
Pittsburgh	33	38	.467	2
St. Louis	31	38	.448	2
Cincinnati	29	40	.420	4
Chicago	28	42	.400	5 1/2
West Division				
San Francisco	40	29	.580	-
Colorado	37	33	.528	3 1/2
Los Angeles	34	35	.493	6
San Diego	29	40	.420	11

Wednesday's interleague results:

NY Yankees 3, NY Mets 2 (10); Detroit 6, Florida 2; Minnesota 8, Pittsburgh 2; Montreal 1, Baltimore 0; Colorado 10, Texas 9; San Francisco 4, Seattle 2; Boston 4, Philadelphia 2; Cincinnati 5, Cleveland 2; Toronto 5, Atlanta 3; Milwaukee 8, St. Louis 4; Chicago White Sox 3, Chicago Cubs 0; Kansas City 6, Houston 2; Los Angeles 7, Anaheim 5; Oakland 11, San Diego 9.

SPORTS

in brief

New giant for Maccabi TA hoopsters

(Ilim) - US basketball player Richard Griffith, 22, is set to sign with Maccabi Tel Aviv. The 2.11-meter center has played the last two years with Turkish club Tofas.

Celerc wins Ascot

LONDON (Reuters) - Celerc (with Pat Eddery up), an 11-2 pick, won the Ascot Gold Cup yesterday, a group one race for four-year-olds and upwards, run over 2 1/2 miles. Placing three-quarters of a length behind, was Classic Cliche, at 6-1 (Frankie Dettori) and in third, a further length back, was 25-1 shot Election Day with Michael Kinane up. Persian Funch was the 9-2 favorite in the 13-horse race.

The winner, owned by Christopher Spence and trained by David Morley, won £113,556.

Thieves steal Melbourne Cup

MELBOURNE (Reuters) - Police are searching for thieves who galloped off with the 1973 trophy from the Melbourne Cup, Australia's most famous horse race, from a racing club display cabinet.

The distinctive three-handled trophy, valued at \$19,000, was discovered missing yesterday from the Victoria Racing Club's committee room, but may have been stolen at any time in the past few weeks, said spokesman Terry Clifton.

The committee room is only used on race days, and because the trophy is in a cabinet with a lot of other trophies, you could walk past it without noticing it was gone," he said.

Police have appealed for help with the trophy's recovery. The 1973 Melbourne Cup, won by Gala Supreme, was donated to the club by the horse's late owner. First run in 1861, the race is one of the world's richest, with a new trophy every year.

Bulls in McDonald's line-up

PARIS (Reuters) - NBA champions Chicago Bulls have completed the six-team line-up for the McDonald's world club championship in Paris in October.

The organizers said NBA commissioner David Stern had confirmed on Wednesday that the Bulls would take part in the October 16-18 championship at the Palais Omnisports in Bercy.

The other participants are European champions Olympiakos of Greece, Spain's Barcelona, Benetton Treviso of Italy, French champions PSG Racing and Argentina's Atenas de Cordoba.

Sydney Harbor clean-up ordered

SYDNEY (Reuters) - Highly toxic waste will be removed from the waters of Sydney Harbor near the site of the 2000 Olympic Games in a clean-up costing \$15.7 million, the New South Wales state government said yesterday.

The operation involves the removal of dioxin contaminants from sediment in Homebush Bay, which is adjacent to the main Olympic complex.

Swimming in that part of Sydney Harbor is prohibited because of the heavy pollution.

The Homebush area of western Sydney, now a massive Olympic building site, was in the past a site for heavy industry. Environmentalists Greenpeace said earlier this month that Homebush Bay was, lamentably, "the new dioxin capital of the world."

Catholic magazine warns of 'Ronalditis'

ROME (Reuters) - Italy's best-selling weekly magazine warned readers yesterday that Ronaldo, expected to be signed by Inter, was a symbol of spendthrift soccer and the country's reluctance to confront its problems.

The Roman Catholic *Famiglia Cristiana*, sold in parish churches across the country and found in most doctors' waiting rooms, devoted its cover to an action shot of the Brazilian striker and warned of "Ronalditis" - which it called an "infantile disease of footballing neoliberalism".

"He, Ronaldo, maybe does not know it, young and inexperienced as he is in matters Italian, but in his way he is a symbol," the magazine added in an editorial.

"Ronaldo, who looks set to leave Barcelona for Inter after endless conjecture and protracted on-off negotiations, has obsessed Italians for months. If, as expected he does join Inter next season, he will become the world's most expensive player at an estimated \$55 million.

Delta Center extortionist nabbed

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) - The FBI on Wednesday arrested a man accused of threatening to blow up the Delta Center this week unless paid an undisclosed sum by Jazz owner Larry Miller.

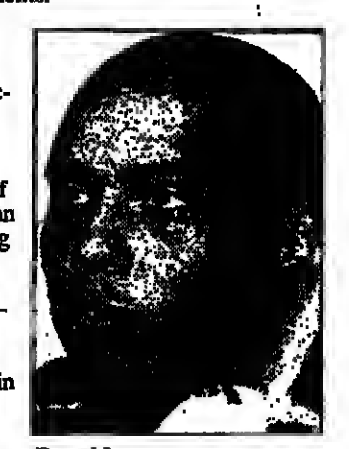
Richard L. Christiansen, 43 was arrested by the bureau's Violent Crimes Task Force, Woods Cross Police Department and investigators from the US Postal Service, said Thomas Kubic, special agent in charge of the FBI's Salt Lake City Division.

Christiansen is charged with two counts of making threatening communications through the mail, each punishable by up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

In letters mailed to two of Miller's auto dealerships, the Jazz owner was instructed to deliver money to a semi-enclosed spot in a field near Sky Park Airport in Woods Cross, according to the FBI.

A package was placed at the field, and Christiansen was arrested following a short vehicle pursuit when he retrieved the box, said FBI special agent Dale Weiss.

"He was caught red-handed," she said.



Ronaldo (Reuters)

Sports Editors: Joseph Hoffman and Ori Lewis

Maxim Levy, UTJ clash over appointment

By LIAT COLLINS

While the coalition is reeling under the fallout of Dan Meridor's resignation, the conversion bill issue, Yisrael Ba'aliya's demands that its preferred candidate be appointed ambassador to Russia, and the lingering Bar-On Affair, a new crisis is in the offing. Geshet's Maxim Levy has resurrected an old dispute which could cause a showdown with United Torah Judaism.

Levy has announced he intends to submit his candidacy to a position on the committee which elects religious court judges. The position became vacant with the recent death of MK Avraham Stern (National Religious Party).

Last November, the elections for the Knesset's two appointees to the panel seriously rocked the coalition. Under the coalition agreement, one of the two committee members chosen by the Knesset must be from United Torah Judaism, but its candidate, Moshe Gafni, failed to get elected after several more coalition MKs, including Levy, put themselves forward for the post. Stern was elected as the coalition's appointment along with Labor's Uzi

Gafni: We'll abide by convert deal

By HAIM SHAPIRO

The religious parties will abide by the compromise agreement between the Conservative and Reform movements and the government on the conversion bill, even though they do not agree to it in principle.

This was made clear yesterday by MK Moshe Gafni (United Torah Judaism), who said that his party would wait until June 30, to see if the petition regarding the conversion of adopted infants by Conservative rabbis is brought before the High Court. If it is not, Gafni said, his party would agree to delay action on the bill "for some weeks."

According to the agreement, the Reform and Conservative are to suspend their petitions to the High Court, while a joint committee, including a representative each of the Conservative and Reform movements and five members from the coalition will reach a compromise agreement by September 15.

Gafni said his party does not agree to the participation of Conservative and Reform rabbis in the committee. "The coalition should come to a decision by itself, as with any other law," he said.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that he believes the



Marlene Post, world president of Hadassah, yesterday presents Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with a statement calling on him to work speedily for a broad consensus on the issue of religious pluralism.

issue is on its way to being settled. Speaking at the ceremony establishing an International Center on Jewish Identity at Bar-Ilan University, he said the compromise talks would soon get under way and he believes the results will be positive.

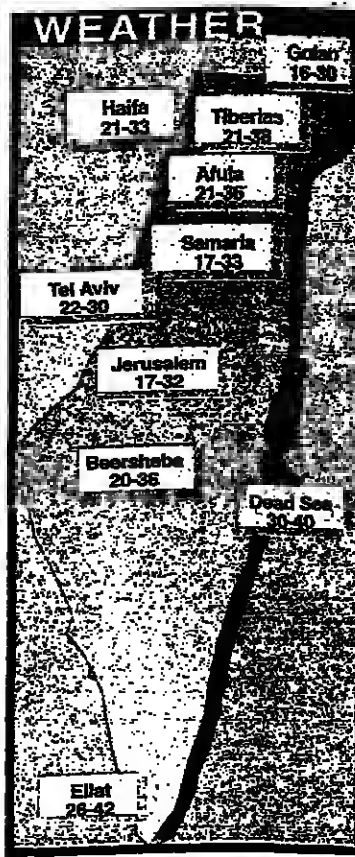
"I don't want this year to be remembered as the year the Jewish people was torn into pieces," he said.

Netanyahu also said he sees the Reform and Conservative as an integral part of the Jewish people. There is no difference between Jew and Jew, and the Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform have valid arguments, he said.

Netanyahu also spoke to the leadership of the World Zionist Organization in Jerusalem, where Hadassah president Marlene Post presented him with a statement

expressing the organization's "distress and dismay over the shocking disintegration of the unity of the Jewish people that we are witnessing in Israel."

She expressed concern that the conversion bill or similar legislation might be passed and the compromise agreement would only be "yet another Band-Aid which will merely hold back the poison for a few more weeks or months."



Forecast: Unusually hot temperatures. Sabbath: Temperatures will continue to rise

AROUND THE WORLD

City	Low	High	Forecast
Amsterdam	10	18	clear
Berlin	12	22	cloudy
Buenos Aires	11	22	cloudy
Calcutta	12	33	clear
Chicago	12	27	clear
Copenhagen	12	19	cloudy
Frankfurt	12	19	cloudy
Geneva	12	24	clear
Helsinki	12	19	clear
Hong Kong	25	29	cloudy
Jakarta	22	28	clear
London	17	24	cloudy
Los Angeles	13	26	clear
Madrid	14	24	cloudy
Moscow	12	18	cloudy
Mumbai	24	31	clear
New York	14	21	cloudy
Paris	14	21	cloudy
Rome	17	29	clear
Stockholm	10	18	clear
Sydney	19	28	cloudy
Tokyo	20	28	cloudy
Toronto	13	21	cloudy
Vienna	14	25	cloudy
Zurich	10	22	cloudy

Conservative Movement condemns lesbian marriage ceremony

By HAIM SHAPIRO

Israel's Conservative movement yesterday condemned a marriage between two women performed by a Reform rabbi on Wednesday night, saying that it had crossed the "red line" in terms of Halacha (Jewish law) and it was a mistake to carry out such a marriage at this time.

The ceremony was performed in Tel Aviv by Rabbi David Ariel-Joel, rabbi of Jerusalem's Har-El Congregation. During the ceremony, held under a tallit (prayer shawl), the two women exchanged rings

and each broke a glass.

Rabbi Einat Ramon, spokeswoman of the Conservative movement, said the movement opposes such rituals. "We see no way, according to Halacha, to make homosexual marriage a halachic norm, even though we recognized the rights of the gay community for civil rights," Ramon said, adding that it would also be a mistake to make such a marriage a norm, especially at a time when heterosexual marriage had to be supported.

Although Ramon did not mention the talks which were still continuing yesterday

between the coalition and Reform and Conservative movements over a compromise agreement regarding conversions carried out by the two movements in Israel, she did say that she thought the timing of the marriage ceremony was "irresponsible."

MK Moshe Gafni (United Torah Judaism) said yesterday the wedding between two women is just additional proof that the Reform movement is only interested in destroying Judaism.

"The Reform are not really interested in conversion or marriage or in helping peo-

ple. They are only interested in overturning Judaism," Gafni said. The Reform, he said, had rejected the Torah, which was the basis of Jewish survival during all the centuries of persecution.

The Council of Progressive Rabbis, the central body of Reform rabbis, yesterday denied the ceremony had been a marriage, but rather a "bonding ceremony" intended to make the relationship public. Rabbi Yoram Mazor, secretary of the CPR, said that Ariel-Joel had allowed a tallit to be used as a canopy, contrary to the decision of the CPR, but there had been no tradi-

tional marriage contract, no wedding blessings, and the rings had been exchanged without halachic formulas.

Mazor said the CPR had been discussing homosexual ceremonies during the past two years, and while its rabbis had expressed themselves in favor of the basic need of every human being for love, warmth, and companionship, it sees the sanctity of the union of marriage between a man and a woman as the ideal. The CPR sees no possibility of conducting homosexual marriage ceremonies according to the law of Moses and Israel, Mazor said.

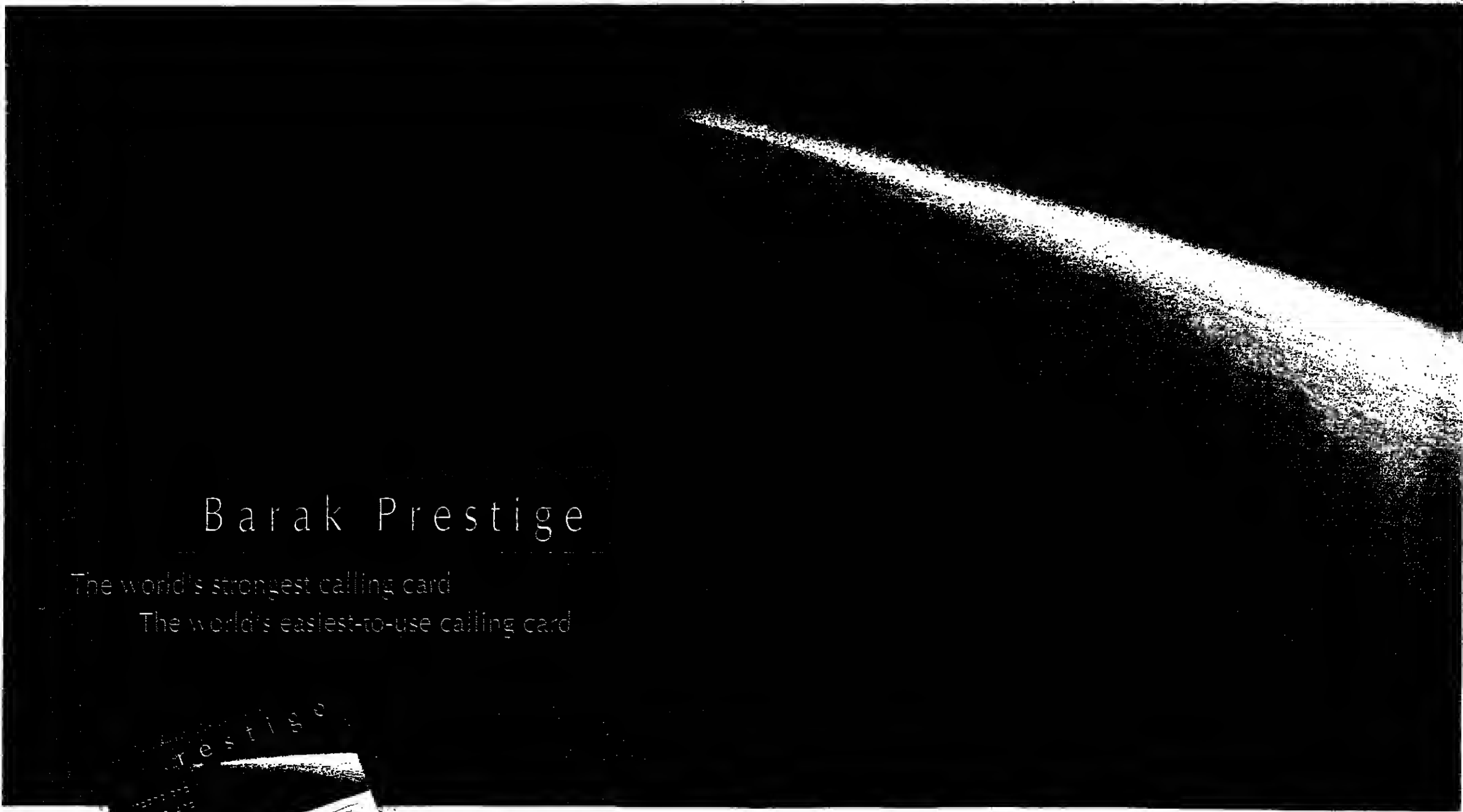
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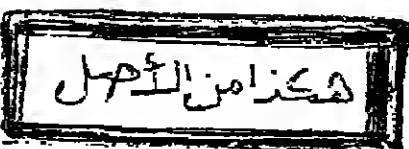
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